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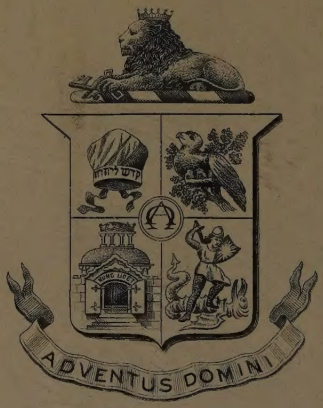

ENTENTE DIPLOMACY AND THE WORLD

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In collaboration with
B. de Siebert
ENTENTE DIPLOMACY
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ENTENTE DIPLOMACY AND THE WORLD

MATRIX OF THE HISTORY OF EUROPE, 1909–14

Presentation of the Policies and Diplomatic Practice of the Russian, British, French, Italian, Japanese, and Balkan, and the German and Austro-Hungarian Governments, by means of the Documents-of-State and Diplomatic Correspondence exchanged by their Foreign Ministers and Representatives, among them Messrs.: Sazonoff, Iswolsky, Benckendorff, Neratoff, Nelidoff, Kokowtzeff, Poklewski-Koziel, Krupenski, Tcharikoff, Osten-Sacken, Swerbeieff, De Giers, Hartwig and Schebeko; Grey, Asquith, Hardinge, Nicolson, Cartwright, Lowther, Buchanan, O'Beirne, Rodd, Goschen, Mallet, Bertie, and Crowe; Poincaré, Pichon, Cruppi, Doumergue, Jules and Paul Cambon, Crozier, Barrère, Bompard, Viviani, Touchard, Caillaux, Delcassé, Paléologue, and Georges Louis; Tittoni, San Giuliano, Giolitti, Toretta, Imperiali, and De Martino; Ito, Katsura, Komura, Motono, and Goto; Milovanowitch, Pashitch, Guechoff, Daneff, Malinoff, Radoslavoff, Said Halim, Hakki, and Rifaat; Bülow, Bethmann-Hollweg, Schön, Jagow, Wangenheim, Metternich, Lichnowsky, Kiderlen-Waechter, Bieberstein, and Quadt; Aehrenthal, Berchtold, Thurn, Czapari, and Giesl; Kings Edward and George, Czar Nicholas, King Victor Emanuel, Emperor William II., and Czar Ferdinand of Bulgaria.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL TEXTS IN HIS POSSESSION

By B. DE SIEBERT

LATE SECRETARY OF THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN EMBASSY AT LONDON

EDITED, ARRANGED AND ANNOTATED

By GEORGE ABEL SCHREINER

AUTHOR OF
"THE IRON RATION," "FROM BERLIN TO BAGDAD," "THE CRAFT SINISTER," ETC.

POLITICAL AND WAR CORRESPONDENT IN EUROPE DURING THE WAR OF "THE ASSOCIATED PRESS OF AMERICA"

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To my friend

FREDERICK FRANKLIN SCHRADER, ESQ.

PLAYWRIGHT, LIBRETTIST, CRITIC,
AND AUTHOR

37272

Tu regere imperio populos Romano, memento.
Hae tibi erunt artes; pasisque imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

—*Virgil.*

NOTE

Though M. B. de Siebert has requested me to assign to him only the rôle of translator in the identification of the authorship of this book, he must, nevertheless, be looked upon as its author. To be sure, the many documents here reproduced are from the minds of other men—the men who made the history of Europe in recent years—but they had no intention whatever of having any of them come to the ken of the public. What they wrote was written in their capacity as statesmen—ministers of foreign affairs and diplomatists—and was by its very character destined to rest forever in the secret archives of governments, more especially the Imperial Russian government in this instance.

It was left to M. de Siebert to take the steps that have resulted in the publication of the diplomatic documents and correspondence herein contained. To explain why and how these steps were taken would not be well, simply because a statement in regard thereto would prejudice the case of one of the Powers involved in the truly stupendous conspiracy against the welfare of mankind herein laid bare.

I take the liberty of saying that it took great courage to do this. Men have earned the displeasure of powerful governments for much less, and if I wanted to enter upon the realm of general knowledge—upon that field which is not supported by official proof—I could say that M. de Siebert, in giving these documents to the world, ran the risk of becoming an attraction to the political assassin. The individuals and groups who encompassed the murder of Jaurés and a number of other con-conformists are still in being, and the same can be said of those who decided upon the death of Archduke Francis Ferdinand and the Duchess of Hohenberg, to which group the Serbian Narodna Odbrana was merely a tool. But

since we are not engaged upon a discussion of matters, which, after all, depend to some extent upon unauthenticable data, no more will be said at this time in connection therewith, lest false impressions be gained and prejudicial opinions formed.

M. de Siebert's own note in regard to the documents reads as follows:

"The translation of the documents is as faithful as possible and has closely followed the sense of the originals, even at the expense of making concessions inimical to style. In the event, however, of this publication giving rise to a discussion throwing doubt upon the exactness of the translation, or insisting upon a different interpretation of the intent and meaning of any document, the original Russian, French and English texts of the separate documents may be referred to."

There are 858 documents in this collection—all that could be published at one time. Great numbers of telegrams were not reproduced, because the very excellent reports of Count Benckendorff, to cite but one case, condensed them in such a manner that it was better to give the public these most comprehensive résumés instead of the dispatches whose burden the Russian ambassador at London thus concentrated into terse monographs intended to keep the Russian ministers of foreign affairs properly informed.

The arrangement of the documents was a difficult task, since in most cases several situations and crises were being dealt with simultaneously, though not usually in the same document. It was finally found that, for the sake of clearness and logical presentation, the documents would have to be divided into three departments, or books. The first of these deals exclusively with questions arising from what may be called the "necessities of empire," which shaped the international course of Russia, Great Britain, France, the United States, Japan and Germany. The book reveals the so-called problems of the Far East and Near East, and then shows that Italy received as her price a free hand in North Africa. Book Two shows the relations of the Entente to Austria-Hungary, and Book Three presents a clear picture of the position of Germany throughout the period covered by the documents.

It will be found that here and there a document is not in its proper place, chronologically. This concession to the reader was made so that he might the better understand the situation—as a matter of fact the absence of a connecting text made recourse to this method necessary. Concerning the deletions, of which a small number will be found, I will say, that the matter eliminated consists of repetitions, irrelevancies and observations foreign to the subject-matter. The English style of orthography has been adhered to in the reproduction of the documents themselves. In my own contribution, American orthography is employed. In regard to the two dates appearing with each document, I must draw attention to the fact that the first is the date of the Russian calendar, and the second that of the Western method of time notation.

While reading, it should be borne in mind that diplomatists have ever been averse to using "strong" and clear language. It has been held that when a diplomatist says "perhaps," he means *no,* and his "yes" is ordinarily the equivalent of *perhaps.* His *no* is the ultimatum—the call to arms, the battle. To arrive at a complete estimate of the words of a diplomatist it is necessary, then, to keep this in mind, especially when dealing with the substance of interviews and the assurances made to one another by ministers of foreign affairs and ambassadors. To read diplomatic correspondence aright is quite an art—one which the general public has neglected entirely too much, largely because it never insisted upon being made at least a partner in the administration of its foreign affairs. Diplomatic phraseology is not unlike the modern professional Latin; it is used to convey more by implication than by direct statement.

For my own humble share of the work, I will say that I have tried to facilitate the reading of the book by the employment of *italics* in the reproduction of such parts of the documents as form the backbone of the gripping story that is told. I found it necessary, also, here and there, to point in this manner to the necessity of passages being read with increased attention so that the hidden meaning or emphasis of them might be detected.

The Introductions were written with a view to giving the reader a fairly complete general survey of the situations dealt with. The footnotes have the same purpose, and if some of them should seem

less sanctimonious than the documents, it is to be remembered that the instructive quality of lighter phrases is usually greater than that of long dissertations of a learned nature. That treatment also was necessary in order to divest diplomatic correspondence of the cloak of governmental infallibility that has been thrown over it, and of which plain men and women have stood in such awe. Though diplomacy delights in being obscurantic, the plain fact is, that it is nothing more than a trading in "considerations" and "compensations"—*un commerce,* as the French might express it.

My own contribution is designed to endorse the views of M. de Siebert that diplomacy must be "de-venomized" before mankind can enter upon an era of sane international relations—before an armament-ridden world can hope to be less often visited by such calamities as the real authors of this book brought on.

It seems to me that the public owes a debt of gratitude especially to one of these authors: Count Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador at London. Of the many contributors there is none that wrote with such remarkable clearness and comprehensive vision. The judgment of Count Benckendorff remained good at all times, and, while he served his government well as a diplomatist, he, nevertheless, was not as oblivious of his duties towards mankind as his colleagues generally. Second to him is M. Iswolsky. His communications, too, are not without a literary charm, even though one find it difficult to agree with his methods as a diplomatist. As much must be said for M. Sazonoff, whose letters and communications, however, reflect more the official tenor of foreign office correspondence.

It seems to me that this acknowledgment is due these men. Their writings were destined to molder in the secret archives of Imperial Russia and no phrase-making for the edification of a reading public had to be considered. The result is that diplomatic affairs, which usually are beclouded by the pomposity of governmental verbiage, are in many instances described in these documents with a directness that is refreshing, and promotive, therefore, of that complete understanding the public must have before an improvement in foreign affairs is possible.

There is, of course, a great deal in the documents that will make the reader smile. Even statesmen and diplomatists are often but

children of a larger growth, and that includes the most prominent of them. Shorn of all its privileges, diplomacy is a business that must make the gods laugh, and I am sure that our political masters will bear with us plain mortals if we presume to share for a while a little in the merriment our recent conduct must have occasioned in Elysium.

FOREWORD

Sine ira et studio.

Some time ago, a minister of one of the Great Powers of Europe designated what he called the "de-venomizing" of international relations as the fundamental condition for the future peaceable intercourse of the nations. These words define precisely the end and purpose of the present publication. They also serve as a personal justification of my resolve to give publicity to the documentary material in my possession. The former Russian Government is buried beneath the ruins of the shattered Empire—I have no other considerations to take.

The fact that I was for several years on the staff of the Russian Embassy in London brought me into immediate contact with the most important happenings of the last five years before the war. Though taking no active part, yet observing and endeavoring to analyze what I saw, I found myself face to face with events which could leave no doubt in the judgment of an unprejudiced observer that Europe was experiencing one of the most critical periods of its history and appeared to be hastening towards an inevitable catastrophe.

It was then that the thought came to me to write a history of this time in later, more dispassionate and enlightened years. The original documents now published by me, together with comprehensive notes regarding personal impressions, observations and conversations, were to serve as material for this work.

To-day, however, I no longer feel equal to this task; I myself lack the necessary confidence in my objectivity. The terrible catastrophe, which has overtaken us, the full consequences of which cannot as yet be fully realized, has shaken every individual human being in his innermost feelings to a degree which makes it impossible to attain the necessary perspective for an objective judgment of all that we have lived through and suffered.

I have therefore given up my original plan of a history of this time and have limited myself to a simple publication of original documentary material, omitting all personal comments, explanations and descriptions. For this reason also I have refrained from writing a connecting text, even though such might have facilitated the study of the documents for the less experienced reader.

The question of who is to blame for the war has become the burning question of the day in the life of the peoples. And it is right that this should be so. For until the question: How was all this possible? has been answered to the very full, the principles of democratic self-determination and social justice in the relations of the peoples to one another can never be realized. Neither the official publications issued up to the present, nor the memoirs of leading statesmen, interesting though these may be in themselves, can prove satisfactory in this respect, —still less satisfactory, to be sure, are the despotic judgments which, flowing so freely from the pen of irresponsible politicians, have found a place in official documents. And yet the people demand ever more stormily to know and to understand, and their cry against secret diplomacy and imperialism becomes ever more impassioned.

This book is not intended as a defense of, nor as an accusation against, individual nations or political personalities. But it is indeed a ruthless exposure of a political system which signifies nothing else than a brutal and purely materialistic striving for increased power, whereby every state has invariably placed Might before Right.

DE SIEBERT.

Switzerland, 1921.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

ENTENTE DIPLOMACY AND THE WORLD excluded from participation in foreign affairs had little in common during the gestative period of the Great War. Now and then, this world heard the rumbling of the distant drum, contemplated the imminent catastrophe with perturbation, and then continued to let foreign offices and their representatives on foreign posts do as they did before. In the end the several national executives informed their parliaments that the *fait accompli* was there. It was then a question of either surrendering national honor, better defined in international law as "sovereignty," or rush into the conflict, which, after having been waged by the foreign offices *in camera* as a game of wits, was now to be translated upon the battlefield, to receive the test of military and naval strength.

Of the real causes the world knew nothing, and still knows nothing really worth knowing. The press everywhere had been used to mislead readers, and when the warring governments began to deluge the world with "colored" books, most of us took their contents to be gospel truth; as in one single aspect they were. The documents published were in themselves exact enough, though forgeries have been discovered in them recently. But they had been culled for a purpose—to show that our own particular government was in the right. To but a few it occurred at the time that the "colored" books were a wholly one-sided presentation of the case. It followed that, if we were right, the others must be wrong. Having but the faintest of notions concerning diplomatic methods, and seeing in the diplomatist and minister of foreign affairs, persons especially anointed by governmental infallibility, we took for granted all things we could not understand, and soon the pas-

sions of war made it entirely superfluous, when not risky, to inquire into the genesis of things.

Governments everywhere saw to it that no inconvenient and impertinent questions were asked. The average citizen stands in awe of high treason, sedition acts and censorship, not so much because he knows that such measures are necessary, but for the reason that they are a *force majeure* that brooks no trifling. And to inquire into the causes of the war would be trifling, as the executive branches of governments view it.

In this frame of mind, everybody set to work to win the war. When peace had been restored, finally, the public fell back into its errors, and new sets of statesmen continue the old policies of their governments and the ancient methods of diplomacy. In a little while there will be other "situations," other "crises," and other wars. Once again the thoughtful will wonder how it came about; again they will lack all data necessary to arrive at an understanding.

This process has been repeated ever since the dawn of history. If proof were needed to demonstrate that mankind refuses to profit by the experience of its forebears, this case would furnish an overwhelming surfeit of it. The ancients based international conduct entirely upon the real or fancied necessities of their states and empires, and we have made not the least improvement upon that despicable system.

While it is true that the natural growth of populations has led to wars in all ages, it is even more a fact that the rapacity of mighty governments has been the cause of the majority of great wars. Wars as a natural phenomenon, due to increase of populations beyond the means of sustenance, have never been as savage as those that were waged in the interest of empires and dynasties. This seems to be the result of the causal intent of the aggressor meeting with a certain amount of recognition by those at whose cost the living conditions of surplus populations are to be improved. The operation is likely to remain within the bounds of the laws of self-preservation, while the wars of empires have primarily a destructive object.

The world public has been too indulgent with the claims of certain governments that they had "rights" and "interests" of the first magnitude in territories to which they had no natural claim.

It has been entirely overlooked, for instance, what rôle foreign investments have played in modern imperialism. A small group invests money in some foreign land, for the sole purpose of private gain, and lays thereby, intentionally or unwittingly, the seed of diplomatic and armed conflict. The resulting war is not fought with the money and blood of the investors, but with the lives and treasure of the national aggregate whose government has thought it well to protect the speculator and concessionary. For the sake of rescuing a small investment, the government concerned will spend huge sums, throw away lives, and face the necessity of having to tax its population for generations, as has been done on so colossal a scale during the Great War.

In the end nothing has been achieved. Militarism may have been crushed in one country, but to keep that militarism down a similar state of armed preparedness, and all it entails, has been established elsewhere. Again, the secret diplomacy of a government has been laid low by the extirpation of that government, but, as has been proven in the last few months, secret diplomacy is thereby transplanted only into other quarters, maybe into soils and climes where this pernicious weed thrives better than before.

Diplomacy is a question of means, naturally. The publication of these documents will make that point much clearer than it has been heretofore.

The optimistically-inclined hold steadfastly to the view that diplomacy is not entirely the exercise of means and resources in behalf of war. To some extent they are right. But the pity is that the subject is argued from false premises. Diplomacy does strive for peace, indeed, but it does that solely at the expense of weaker states and groups. Diplomacy as we have adjudged it, and as now unmasked, can be placated into postponing war, but it cannot be induced to abandon its objective, to wit: The aggrandizement of those whom it represents. From diplomacy, peace may be had only upon unconditional surrender, even if at first there be some inclination to compromise. One concession leads to the other, and, finally, abject submission is demanded and forms the sole basis of further relations. The question of right has no place—not even the humblest—in diplomacy. Only the imposition of the superior will counts, and war is the only alternative.

War, then, is the continuation of international politics by other means. When the diplomatist feels that threats suffice no longer to get him what he wants, he hands the case to the cabinet and the executive, who in turn delegate further action to the general staffs, acquainting parliament merely with what has been done.

Such is in sum and substance the basis of present-day international relations. Governments are powerful merely because those whom they govern are great in numbers and wealth. The creed of the wealthy individual becomes in that manner the creed of the powerful government. If it be true that no people ever had a better government than it deserved, it is just as true that no people ever had better foreign relations than the quality of its government merited. A government brutal towards the governed is bound to be equally brutal and cynical toward foreign aggregates whose misfortune it may be to come in contact with it.

The Imperial Government of Russia supplied a telling example of this.

There had been much friction between Russia and Great Britain. Though Russia was in possession of one-half of the European continent and a good third of the largest continent, Asia, it seemed impossible to appease its appetite for more territory. There was no question at all of needing room for a surplus population, no question at all of lacking natural resources, and no aspect of self-defense was involved. For all that, the Russian government cast eyes upon India and followed for decades a policy that constantly reminded the British that the safety of their Indian empire was threatened. The Russian government could not have done anything for the Indian people which the British could not do better, and if the East-Indians had to be under foreign domination at all, their well-wishers could not have advised them to change masters. The lot of the poor *moujik* in Russia was such that the Indians themselves should have had no doubt as to that. But what certain leaders in India thought possible was, that the fine promises of the Russian agents would be carried into effect; that India would be made an independent state. If argument were needed to show that the Indian leaders of those days were really not fit to captain their people, it would be found in the great naivety they displayed in the belief that Russia wanted to help them for their own sake.

Anglo-Russian relations were bad for many years on account of the activity of Russian agents in India and Afghanistan. Viewed in the light of "national honor," Great Britain had many excuses to discourage the Russians, by going to war with them. But Russia was not easily attacked. In those days, the Germans were her friends, and the welfare of the British empire permitted of no military enterprise that contained so little insurance against defeat as this. Since the Crimean war, conditions had changed considerably. France was no longer to be depended upon, with the result that the British government had to face a possible European coalition in case she attacked Russia.

The war between the Chinese and Japanese, and the Russo-Japanese war brought the Far East upon the international stage. The British were the first to realize that the development of modern industry and commerce was bound to make the question of markets the predominant issue in modern foreign relations. The Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance was concluded, which, so far as others have been able to speculate upon its text, provides for the defense in the Far East of British and Japanese interests. Russia found it necessary to safeguard her position in Manchuria and Mongolia by a similar agreement with Japan, after it had been shown that a single-track railroad across Siberia did not suffice to impose Russian desires upon Japan, militarily.

Out of this came a rivalry in which the United States and Germany were on one side, and Russia, Japan, Great Britain and France on the other, until the British government succeeded in modifying the position of the United States government sufficiently to make a *modus vivendi* possible. Korea and Southern Manchuria were surrendered to Japan, while Northern Manchuria and Mongolia fell into the hands of the Russians, leaving to Great Britain and France the purely financial and commercial fields, and to all others such leavings as there were.

Having agreed upon this, and having come to an understanding in regard to a country in which neither Russia nor Great Britain had even the smallest financial interest—Tibet, the governments of London and St. Petersburg looked for another victim.

Persia had the poorest sort of government. It also had been unfortunate enough to take up loans in foreign countries. Both

handicaps were made use of by the Russians and British. In 1907 the two governments decided upon the division of Persia into three zones. Russian influence was to prevail in the North, and British sway in the South, with a narrow strip across the country to separate the two, lest there be a renewal of the border incidents in the direction of India.

It had been learned in London that the Russian government was interested in securing a port on the Persian Gulf. That meant the building of a trans-Persian railroad, which would lead to the total annexation of the country by Russia, no matter what name the action might be given. Russia had been too unneighborly hitherto to leave doubt in the British mind what that would mean. It was necessary, then, to reach an understanding with Russia, and this was arrived at over the prostrate body of a state whose people had had the misfortune of having been ruled too long by a vicious tyrant, and an even more vicious upper caste.

The public expressions by the interested governments had it that reforms were to be introduced in Persia for the good of the people. How totally lacking in sincerity these promises were was shown by the ruthless disregard for everything Persian that marked the conduct of the invaders.

France participated in the occupation of Persia through the making of loans—investments that were profitable not only in legitimate returns on the money put up, but also in the less legitimate field of international relations. Each million of francs invested by the French in territories under the political control of Russia and Great Britain made more insoluble the "ties of the Entente," to use the words of the diplomatists. Material interests, unfortunately, seem to be the only cement that will hold groups together. It was so in this case. The more money democratic France invested in countries where reactionary Russia had political influence, the closer the two countries were drawn together, much to the disgust of the progressive and radical elements in the French republic.

The lot of the Ottoman empire would have been similar to that of Persia, were it not that the control of the Straits—the Bosphorous and Dardanelles—entered into the plans that were considered. In and about Constantinople, Russian and British interests clashed,

and since the empire of the Turks could not be further divided just then, without affecting the status of the capital and her waterways, a hands-off policy had to be adopted by Great Britain and Russia, on the basis of mutual distrust.

In that manner, the realm of the Turk was made neutral territory, leaving it a comparatively free field for the commerce and enterprise of those powers against whom the Entente was principally directed: Germany and Austria-Hungary. Friction between the Russians and British in Persia had established that it would not be well to carry the system of "political penetration" into Turkey. Just as every disturbance in the Persian provinces was felt in Teheran, so would trouble in the Ottoman provinces upset things in Constantinople, in case joint control of the empire was imposed by Russia and Great Britain. The Russians might have run the risk but the British could not afford to extend that phase of relations with the reckless men who presided over foreign affairs in St. Petersburg.

The Russians, on their part, had to consider that Great Britain would never tolerate their occupation of the Ottoman capital in addition to Russia having within its zone of influence, Teheran, capital of Persia. It seems that they had no doubt as to this. On the other hand, they could not consent to the occupation of Constantinople by the British, since that might lead to the "historic mission" of Russia being never realized.

This being the aspect of the case, London and St. Petersburg agreed not to divide the Ottoman empire.

It was the fashion in Central Europe at that time to speak of the Straits question as a matter in which all the Powers had an interest. That they had an interest is true enough, but it is now shown that this was no guarantee of their views being honored. Whether or not the Turk should remain in Europe, instead of being driven to the interior of Anatolia, was something that was beyond the Central Powers as soon as the Entente had decided to promote the interests of its members by imposing their rule, singly or jointly, upon the less advanced peoples of Asia and Africa. The documents show definitely that the status of Constantinople and the Straits, and with this the future of the Ottoman empire, was shaped not by the Concert of Europe, but by the Russian,

British and French ministries of foreign affairs. Iswolsky and Sazonoff were ever ready to come to a better understanding with Sir Edward Grey in regard to the Straits, but the British secretary of foreign affairs was just as anxious to avoid the critical situation that would ensue from an attempt to replace the provisions of the Paris Dardanelles Treaty, though in 1908 he gave Iswolsky some hope that the matter would be looked into, which hope he extended to Sazonoff again in 1911.

While the Sultan of Turkey had at one time been overlord over most of North Africa, there remained now only two insignificant territories in which his word was law: Cyrenaica and Lybia. The hinterland of both countries is desert. It was decided, therefore, to leave this part of the Turkish domain to the Italians, though only after France had made herself master of Morocco in a series of crises that shook the peace of Europe to its very foundations.

Italy had ceased to be an enthusiastic member of the Triple Alliance. Austria-Hungary held territories peopled by Italians, and a powerful *irredenta* movement for the redemption of "unredeemed" Italy set in. Naturally, a great deal of feeling against Austria-Hungary was developed by this, and overcame finally every political and economic consideration which had induced Signor Crispi to join Germany and Austria-Hungary. In 1902 this led to the making of an agreement between Italy and France by which both countries promised one another not to make their joint border districts armed camps as they had done hitherto. Franco-Italian relations improved rapidly from that moment on, being in the able hands of M. Barrère, so far as French efforts in Rome were concerned. Mr. Rennel Rodd, the British ambassador at Rome, worked earnestly toward the same end, as did M. Krupenski, the Russian ambassador, especially after the Agreement of Racconigi had been made, by which Russia and Italy undertook to protect the *status quo* in the Balkans against further encroachment by Austria-Hungary, which had just then effected the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the risk of a general war.

Diplomacy avails itself of every means at its disposal and pays little attention to logic and ethics. Thus the fate of the Christians in the Ottoman empire was once more made an argument why Italy should take Cyrenaica and Lybia. The war was a long,

drawn-out affair and when peace was thought of finally, Italy faced a huge national deficit and realization that the Entente wanted her to be satisfied with what she had taken in North Africa and look for no more, especially none of the islands in the Aegean which she coveted; Turkey, on her part, was more bankrupt than before, and saw another struggle with the Balkans approaching.

Great Britain had not done poorly by these deals in Turkish and Moroccan territories. France had given her compensations in Egypt that made her mistress of that country, with the result that when the French government decided to extend its influence in Morocco, by the temporary occupation of the capital, Fez, Sir Edward Grey was on the side of France and opposed to the reasonable claims of Spain and Germany.

The British government had been averse to entering into agreements with Russia of so definite a character that a *casus foederis* had to be recognized. In fact, Sir Edward Grey had kept out of such entanglement even with the French, so far as records go. A *casus foederis* provision was making hard the life of Germany, whom Austria-Hungary plunged into difficulties without number by her policy in the Balkans—a policy that brought not the least benefit to the Germans, despite the fact that it was moral at least in so far as the Berlin Congress of 1878 could make it that.

Sir Edward Grey was fully familiar with the background of Germano-Austro-Hungarian relations, and needed no other lesson in the science of foreign relations when it came to alliances. But he was willing to have the Entente continue him in a position in which he would be able to select his own *casus belli*, as in the end he did.

Iswolsky and Sazonoff, both, tried several times to have the Anglo-Russian understandings in regard to the Far East and Persia ripen into an alliance. Pichon, Poincaré and Doumergue did as much in behalf of France, but the British government was perfectly satisfied with retaining full freedom of action, with its relations with Russia and France as re-insurance. The entire extent of that policy is being delineated for the first time by these documents.

Germany had to abstain from "political penetration" of foreign lands, because the world had been well divided-up by the time her

navy became a factor. She settled upon a policy of "peaceful penetration" therefore, the principal ingredient of which was trade on the basis of profit and confidence. By means of this policy, she had invaded the world market in a manner that alarmed not only Great Britain, but France and Russia as well. While to British industry and trade, German competition was directly harmful, in addition to giving Germany the means to develop her war fleet and merchant marine, the French and Russians had to consider that with increasing wealth Germany might grow still more powerful as a military antagonist, a fact which was made clear enough when France and Russia discouraged the limitation of German naval armament lest more money of the German taxpayer should thus be free for investment in the military establishment.

There is no need of anticipating the telling message of the documents by going into the minor difficulties that arose between Triple Entente and Triple Alliance. They are dealt with here by their very authors. But something must be said anent the several attempts that were made to render relations between the two groups less unpleasant.

The documents speak of the necessity of preserving the peace of Europe, and one of the arguments of Sazonoff was that the perfection of a new triple alliance, between France, Great Britain and Russia, would prevent war, and now and then Count Benckendorff permits it to show through that a general understanding among the nations of Europe would not be a bad thing.

For the first proposition it may be said that it was not a bad one, provided the new triple alliance had been formed for the express purpose of preserving peace. But Sazonoff's conduct was such as to leave the impression that he wanted the alliance only to promote the "historic mission" of Russia, which was Pan-Slavism under Russian domination—the Greater Russia. In her own interest Great Britain could not favor the creation of an empire the government of which the British had so little reason to trust. Though French statesmen were obliged to listen with more sympathy to the overtures of Iswolsky and Sazonoff, they, too, had views of their own when it came to reducing to hard and fast terms the policy of the Entente. The Franco-Russian alliance was ample

insurance for the French, as against the Germans, and with London the French foreign office had understandings that served every other purpose, as the outbreak of the European war has demonstrated. Moreover, there was a political advantage for the French in the fact that they could act as sponsors for the Russians in all matters of especial delicacy.

Germany was made to feel that the main currents of Entente policy were directed against her. The documents disclose the full extent to which our statesmen realized this, and they present overwhelming testimony proving that the Berlin government wanted to come to an understanding with Great Britain and France—at least with Great Britain, if France could not be induced to abandon the idea of *la revanche*. There was a strong faction in Germany which looked upon the alliance with Austria-Hungary as a liability offset by the poorest of assets. It was especially this group, North-German in the main, which was eager to demobilize the forces that were conducting the European war already in print and on platform. Some headway was made by them in England, but not enough to really change anything, as Count Benckendorff knew well enough, though he lived through many an anxious moment as the result of the efforts on both shores of the North Sea to put brakes on the diplomatic and literary promotion of the great conflagration. Success of the German and British pacifists would have meant a new political orientation for Russia and France—the end of the dangerous situation, therefore. Count Benckendorff would not have regretted that, if the liberty may be taken to draw that conclusion from his correspondence, but to Sazonoff, Iswolsky, and the Grand-Ducal war clique that would have been a great blow. However, the Russian ambassador at London knew Sir Edward Grey too well to ever despair of the situation, or seeing his reputation as "the best diplomatist" in Europe ruined. The necessities of empire of the British were such that Germany had to be reduced to much lower position than she occupied. Convinced of the imperative qualities of this fact, Count Benckendorff was able to report to Sazonoff that all would be well in the end.

The reader of the documents will be struck by the paucity of information concerning the activity of Berlin and Vienna. Germany and Austria-Hungary had contact with the Entente gov-

ernments only to the extent to which the correspondence of the Entente diplomatists deals with German and Austro-Hungarian foreign relations, either directly or indirectly. Except when a crisis was on, Berlin and Vienna had relations with Paris, London and Petrograd that were simply several degrees less bad. There is no other way of expressing it. For the rest, the Berlin and Vienna governments dealt only with one another, very much as two parts of a besieged fortress might do that. German diplomacy was utterly impotent beyond the very limited spheres here indicated, and the documents explode completely the many claims to the contrary that have been set up by the friends and foes of Germany alike.

Though attention has been drawn to certain main tendencies of the several governments, no attempt will be made to pass judgment upon particular acts and men. The summing-up will be left to the reader, who should not lose sight of the fact that the individuals who wrote the documents were intensely national and racial.

There is no nation that does not have its aspirations and ambitions, and in reviewing the conduct of others that should be borne in mind. Sazonoff meant well by his empire, Iswolsky meant well by his race—the Slavs, and Count Benckendorff meant well by his country, Russia. Sir Edward Grey had the interests of the British empire at heart, as had Sir Arthur Nicolson and Hardinge. Poincaré meant to wipe out the defeat of 1870-71, while Pichon was more concerned with the welfare of the France of the hour. The brothers Cambon were their devoted servants, each of them a patriot. Tittoni entered into liaison with Russia and France with his conscience troubling him, because he felt that Italy had become disloyal to an alliance that had been her salvation. Counts Aehrenthal and Berchtold considered themselves empire builders, but erred in believing that opportunity is a wholly negligible factor in that. Milovanovitch and Pashitch made the same mistake, as did many others who took it for granted that before one's own national and racial aspirations, ambitions, and missions those of less fortunate peoples must make room.

It is, then, not solely a question of determining who was responsible for the Great War, but one also of seeing what can be done

in the interest of better international relations in the future. To have the Entente continue her policies will not be well for mankind in general, even though the world has now passed almost completely under the control of the two remaining members of that combination. To make the balance of trade the governing factor in foreign intercourse is dangerous also, because the resulting economic discriminations cannot but breed hatred and more war. If there be possible such a thing as an empire of human solidarity and a balance of friendship among men, sane men and women must welcome both, after they have received, in these pages, their first initiation into the very heart of diplomacy.

SCHREINER.

New York, July, 1921.

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BOOK ONE

THE ENTENTE IN CHINA AND ISLAM

Entente Diplomacy and the World

INTRODUCTION TO BOOK ONE

THE ENTENTE IN CHINA AND ISLAM

I

RUSSIA, JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES IN CHINA

(October 1909—March 1914)

The several attempts made by China and Japan to come to a fairly permanent understanding among themselves failed, because the European Powers opposed a *rapprochement* between the two leading Powers in the Far East, and Japan, on the whole, followed so unscrupulous and selfish a policy that China was never able to trust her would-be ally.

The United States found it necessary to safeguard its commercial interests in the Far East against persistent encroachment on the part of Russia and Japan. Feeling that the efforts of the government of the United States were directed against them in particular, and being the secret opponents of the policy of the "Open Door," Russia and Japan decided, in the spring of 1910, to reach a more definite agreement in regard to the question than they had subscribed to in the past. Russia and Japan harbored the intention of dividing the Far East among themselves. The policy of the "Open Door" was against this.

In the United States and Germany it was felt that the Manchurian railroads had to be protected against exclusive control by

the Russians and Japanese. The endeavor that came from this was styled a "notorious American project" by the Russian ambassador at Tokio.

Having divided Persia with Russia, Great Britain was obliged to play fast and loose. The division of Persia into a Russian and a British zone of influence was too great a consideration with Sir Edward Grey to permit his doing much in behalf of the "Open Door" in the Far East. Japan was the ally of Great Britain, and Russia was being humored in Persia for the purpose of diverting her attention from India and keeping in check the constantly expanding Near East trade of the Germans. Such being the objects pursued, Sir Edward had to be cautious.

The alliance with Japan, and the understanding with Russia had another good effect so far as Great Britain was concerned. It made it possible to reduce the British fleet in the Asiatic seas. The units thus liberated from service in Chinese waters were added to the British home fleet, a step which the rapid growth of the German navy made necessary.

France had only financial interests in the Far East, but lost no opportunity of being of help to her ally—Russia. The fate of China, therefore, depended upon the United States and Germany, both of whom stood for the principle of the "Open Door," to wit: The right of all nations to trade in the Far East and make investments there on an economic, instead of a political, basis. Germany and the United States opposed not only the control of the Far Eastern railroads by Russia and Japan, but objected to the attempts made to make further railroad construction in the Far East contingent upon the good will of Russia and Japan.

The various measures proposed by the United States and Germany caused Russia and Japan to make, in April-May 1910, a treaty relating to their "interests" in Manchuria. That treaty was a public one, so far as the world knew; in reality the public treaty was but the mask of the secret treaty that was made simultaneously. The provisions of the latter were such that all trade in Manchuria, as well as all further railroad construction, would have passed into the control of the Russians and Japanese, just as had been done by Great Britain and Russia in Persia as the result of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907.

The documents do not make it clear that Sir Edward Grey was taken into the full confidence of Russia and Japan, but they do show that he had no objection to Paragraph 2 of the public treaty, which was the blanket warrant for the plans of the Russians and Japanese. France also had no objection, and it was left to the United States and Germany to fight the battle of the "Open Door."

China had been greatly alarmed by news of the treaty, and Russia and Japan agreed to impose their will upon the Chinese militarily, if necessary, diplomacy to be used merely as a threat. In other words, the partition of China, so far as Russia and Japan were concerned, had been definitely agreed upon.

Since the United States government took most of the initiatives in favor of the "Open Door," the thwarting efforts of Russia and Japan were directed against it, of course. Having ascertained that Germany also meant to defend that principle to the best of her ability, Secretary of State Knox, in November 1910 seems to have been ready to resist the joint action of Japan, Russia, France and Great Britain. France, interested financially in Manchuria, appears to have been under the impression that the United States wanted to secure complete control of Manchuria, though the evidence shows that she was not convinced of this and opposed the "Open Door" largely because her ally, Russia, had to be pleased, and Germany's trade could in that manner be limited, if not driven from the Far East, which would have been the lot of United States commerce also.

Since the Chinese government saw salvation only in joining the United States and Germany in the "Open Door" policy, Russia and Japan had to occupy themselves constantly with the application of force, as in December of 1910, for instance.

By this time, Japan had openly made herself mistress of Southern Manchuria, with the result that Russia saw in this the excuse for attempting the same in the northern districts, all the more so since Korea had been annexed. Fearing that too much aggression might finally drive China entirely into the arms of the United States and Germany, Russia and Japan lessened pressure a little, but decided that the question would have to be definitely disposed of before the completion of the Panama Canal made it possible for the United States to use all of its fleet in the Pacific.

The attitude of the British government remained much the same up to now. Tied to Russia by a community of interests in Persia and by a common hostility towards Germany, Sir Edward Grey gave Petrograd and Tokio a free hand.

The Chinese revolution was used by Russia and Japan to further promote their interests in the Far East. A memorandum of the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Sazonoff, of January 23, 1912, says that conditions made it necessary for Russia to strengthen her position "in the Far East by force of arms and to annex diverse Chinese territories." The opposition to the attitude of the United States and Germany was as great as ever, because, as Sazonoff put it at the time, that attitude was "inimical" to the interests of Russia.

Specifically, the attitude of the United States at that time was: That China needed money to improve and extend her railroad system and develop her natural resources. The Russian government was opposed to this, knowing well enough that such development would have put China not only in condition to defend herself, but would have made her a national neighbor to be respected, instead of exploited, as had been the case hitherto. Japan's attitude was the same.

The United States had offered Russia the chance to participate in the financial reforms and economic betterment in China. But that required not only capital, but put into the background the political and territorial aspirations of the St. Petersburg government. Russia was constantly hard up, and while she was able to reserve for herself in Persia a large number of railroad and other development concessions, she was not able to do so in China and Manchuria, because the United States meant business and was not, like Great Britain in Persia, collecting concessions and reserving special rights for none but a political purpose.

There had been formed by that time a syndicate of American, English, French and German capitalists that was to come to the assistance of the "Open Door" principle. France participated in that, because her investments in the Far East were already large enough to recommend a saner policy than Russia and Japan were applying. Russia was asked to join the combination, but refused to do so, because her one vote in the syndicate could not accom-

plish what she and Japan secretly desired. Sazonoff hoped that he could persuade the French government to do what it usually did—prevent participation of French capital in enterprises "inimical to the Entente," as the expression was, but on this occasion he failed.

Sazonoff asked Grey to become active along the same lines, and in March 1912, the situation had been sufficiently changed to enable the United States minister at Pekin to inform the Russian minister that "his instructions contained nothing which could cause him to thwart" Russian actions in Mongolia and Manchuria. "This caused Sir John Jordan (the British minister at Pekin), to inform us that no other Power would attempt to oppose our measures," reported the Russian minister to China to his chief.

The outcome of this was that Russia and Japan signed a secret convention in regard to the Russian and Japanese spheres of interest in Mongolia, the text of which was first submitted to the French and British governments for their approval, so that it was no longer a question in which Russia and Japan, the signatories, alone were involved, but which, by virtue of assent, concerned now the entire Entente. Mongolia was definitely divided by Russia and Japan, and the interests of neither the United States nor Germany were considered.

A puppet state was set up in Mongolia, and then it was shown that Great Britain had gotten her compensations in Tibet, which up to now consisted of nothing but the permission of the Russians to the British to send a "scientific expedition" into that country.

With Mongolia and Manchuria now in the hands of the Russians and Japanese, the British wanted freedom of action in Tibet, for which Sazonoff demanded British recognition of Russia's "exclusive sphere of influence in Northern Manchuria, Mongolia and Western China, with the exception of Kashgar, as well as the undertaking not to hinder us (Russia) in the execution of our plans in these territories."

The conditions of Russia were accepted by Great Britain, and, in March 1914, Sazonoff was able to put the Chinese government face to face with having to give the Russians a number of railroad concessions, which, if developed, would have placed the whole of China at the mercy of Russia and Japan. With the concessions

was to go the right to exploit the natural resources of China, which, according to Sir Edward Grey, was not a feature of the railroad agreements made by China with other Powers and groups.

The outbreak of the European war interrupted the negotiations.

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(1) *The Russian Minister at Pekin to M. Iswolsky, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Telegram, Oct.* 2-15, 1909.

The news of the arrival of Prince Ito,[1] on a visit to our Minister of Finance, appears to have aroused great disquiet in Government circles here, *as closer relations between Russia and Japan to the disadvantage of China are feared.* The possibility is again mooted of our selling the southern section of the Manchurian Railway and signing an agreement concerning Manchuria. *It seems to me that the Chinese Government must fear that the disapproving attitude of several Powers, especially Russia, towards the Chinese-Japanese agreement, together with the protests of the foreigners in the Charbin question, might lead to a close understanding between Russia and Japan in order to protect their reciprocal interests in Manchuria against China and the other Powers.* The distrust of the Chinese is strengthened apparently by the knowledge that they have not fulfilled the obligations undertaken by them towards us on April 27, *and they also evince a resistance that might easily determine us to secure for ourselves the support of Japan for the solution of the pending problems.* Should the Chinese put any questions of this nature to me, I fully intend to give an evasive reply and not to reassure them, as this may lead to their assuming a more yielding attitude towards us.

(2) *The Russian Ambassador at Tokio to Iswolsky. Telegram, Sept.* 29-*Oct.* 12, 1909.

Prince Ito is travelling to Charbin to confer with our Minister of Finance. He entertains the intention of giving reassuring explanations on the latest Japanese-Chinese treaty, and he will perhaps attempt to prepare the way towards a closer understanding for the protection of the Russo-Japanese interests. He will also touch on the question of a definite treaty between the East Chinese

[1] Ex-minister of foreign affairs of Japan.

and the South Manchurian Railway Companies. *Although Ito does not belong to the present administration and his mission is not an official one, he has consulted with the members of the Cabinet.* In any case, the Japanese Government will use his very considerable authority, and his reputation of being a convinced friend of Russia's —in order to influence, as favourably as possible, Russian public opinion. *A number of papers are already pointing out that a Russo-Japanese-Chinese agreement might possibly be arrived at on the Manchurian questions, thus creating a counterweight against American designs in Manchuria.*

(3) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Pekin. Telegram, Oct.* 5-18, 1909.

Your telegram of October 2 received.

I share your opinion that it will be advantageous not to give any reassuring explanations to the Chinese on the occasion of Prince Ito's journey and the possibility of a rapprochement between Russia and Japan.

(4) *The Russian Ambassador at Tokio to Iswolsky. Telegram, Dec.* 2-15, 1909.

Goto[1] has promised to inform me of Katsura's[2] opinion on the proposed action of Russia and Japan in Manchuria. *Personally he believes that it is in the highest degree desirable to undertake nothing in Manchuria without having previously arrived at an agreement between Russia and Japan.* He thereby referred to our agreement with China in Charbin and to the Japanese-Chinese agreement concerning the Kanto Territory. These two questions should only be jointly regulated. The solidarity of the two Powers is to be given expression not only for China's sake but also for that of the other Powers. *No doubts can then be harboured as to the ability of Russia and Japan independently to solve the Manchurian question by mutual arrangement.*[3] *The proposed railway and tariff agreements would prove to Europe and America that a political rapprochement had taken place between Russia and Japan.* He informed me in strict confidence that the Mikado had expressed the desire that his Government should

[1] Japanese minister at Pekin.
[2] Prime minister of Japan.
[3] Without the United States.

further friendly relations with Russia. *Prince Ito's journey has served to bring about an agreement in the Manchurian question.*

(5) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec. 7-20, 1909.*

Goto has communicated to me the viewpoint of the Japanese Prime Minister in the Manchurian question. Katsura believes that the political aspect offers great difficulties and necessitates careful deliberation, as other Powers have to be taken into consideration. He thinks we ought to begin with economic questions; these might comprise railway-tariff and telegraph questions. The political part would then refer to administrative measures in the expropriated zone, *the two Governments to come to a mutual understanding before applying to China on these points.*[1] Incidentally, Tokio would be glad to become acquainted with our standpoint.

(6) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 11-24, 1909.

Apropos of the American proposition,[2] *the Minister told me that he considered it to be the right moment for Russia and Japan, who had undertaken the first step towards an understanding in* 1907, *now to decide on the second step.* The joint interests in Manchuria should serve as basis for the future development of political relations. He is not quite certain what shape such an agreement should take and what concrete questions should be dealt with, but he regards it as imperative to enter immediately into an exchange of opinions. Komura asked me whether I had received instructions referring hereto. I replied that I had not received any instructions but that I could not doubt your acquiescence.

(7) *The Russian Ambassador at Washington to Iswolsky. Telegram, Dec.* 15-28, 1909.

The project contained in the memorandum presented to you has been handed, as Knox[3] informs me, to Germany and England, whose agreement in principle has been received. No news has been

[1] Whose territory was being expropriated.
[2] Neutralization of the Manchurian railroads for the purpose of preserving the principle of the "Open Door," viz.: the opportunity of all to do business in Manchuria and China.
[3] United States Secretary of State.

received so far as to the Japanese attitude. *Knox's project, according to what he told me, has as its objective the neutralisation of Manchuria under the control of the Great Powers, the safeguarding of China's rights in this country and the establishment of a buffer between Russia and Japan, in order to preclude the possibility of a conflict between these two states.*

Japan's attitude in this question will, to my thinking, prove whether the plans of this nation aim at Manchuria or at the Ussurian territory. The fact that such aims exist is proved to me by the constant development of the military land-forces if one does not wish to assume that Japan is really and exclusively concerned with purposes of defence, in order to be in a position to defend her conquests in Korea against all unforeseen events.

(8) *The Russian Ambassador at Tokio to Iswolsky. Letter, Dec.* 31, 1909-*Jan.* 13, 1910.

I have just had a talk of two hours' duration with Motono.[1] *We naturally spoke of the notorious American project.* Komura[2] has communicated to the Ambassador the negotiations which are taking place between both States regarding the project. Motono is extremely satisfied that our two Governments are proceeding jointly in this question. He regards it as noteworthy that the draft of the Japanese answer was first communicated to us and that you gave a similar promise concerning the Russian reply to be returned to the Americans. The Ambassador regards this mutual trust not only as a sign of mutual confidence but also as a constantly progressing community of our policy in Manchuria.

As regards the development of the agreement of 1907, *the Ambassador regards the American proposal as a clear proof of the necessity of bringing about an understanding between Russia and Japan in the Manchurian question.*

On my pointing out the difficulty of finding a formula for such a rapprochement, the Ambassador indicated that the treaties with China on the East Chinese and South Manchurian railways are limited as to time.

[1] Japanese minister at St. Petersburg.
[2] Minister of foreign affairs of Japan.

"Does the Russian Government really entertain the intention of restoring its line to China on the date fixed for the repurchase?" the Ambassador inquired.

I naturally gave an evasive reply and merely called his attention to the fact that this period comes into effect only 36 years after the beginning of the exploitation of the railway-line and that it was therefore difficult to predict such far-off events. *The Ambassador's remark, however, leads me to infer that the intentions cherished by Japan are much more comprehensive than I first thought fit to assume.* I do not believe that Japan's representative at Petersburg, usually so cautious, would otherwise have brought forward this difficult question, had he not been especially instructed to do so. Should the Japanese Government decide to touch on this question in the coming negotiations, it would clearly prove how greatly Japan is interested in the maintenance of the status quo in Manchuria and in our support.

Reverting to the idea of a new political agreement with us, Motono emphasized the fact that the agreement of 1907 bore an exclusively negative character, whilst the new treaty must contain positive provisions. Apparently, he greatly desires that the general outlines of the forthcoming negotiations should be determined whilst he is still in Japan, i.e. until the middle of February. I should therefore be greatly obliged to you for instructions at your earliest convenience.

(9) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Dec.* 31. 1909-*Jan.* 13, 1910. *No.* 2291.

Sub. No. 2. I send you a short extract from the answer we intend presenting to the American Government in reply to the project of neutralisation of the Manchurian Railway. *May I request you to communicate the contents confidentially to Grey and to add that we are acting in agreement with Japan in this matter?*

(10) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 31, 1909-*Jan.* 13, 1910. No. 2291.

No. 2. In our reply to the American proposal, we establish the fact that the situation in Manchuria does not in our view embody anything which could call into question China's integrity or the

principle of the Open Door, *and we refuse to agree to the American project for the neutralisation of the Manchurian railways.* Our attitude, on the one hand, is based on the disadvantageous results that would ensue for the railway companies and the numerous private interests involved, whilst, on the other hand, we have to consider the importance the line in question has for our East Asiatic communications, so that we could hardly permit any alteration of the situation to take place in these districts. Whilst declaring ourselves ready in principle to discuss the plan of a railway-line from Chinchow to Aigun, we request further information regarding details. *Concerning the possibility of the construction of other railway-lines in Manchuria by the international syndicate of the Chinchow-Aigun Railway, we reserve to ourselves the right of examining this question from the standpoint of our own interests.*

(11) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, Dec.* 31, 1909-*Jan.* 13, 1910.

Enclosed you will find a résumé of the negotiations on the American proposal.

As soon as the new American Ambassador, Mr. Rockhill, took up his new post at St. Petersburg he began to prepare us for a somewhat indefinite proposal of united procedure in the Far East. In various separate conversations he would point either to the Japanese-Chinese agreements, or to the misunderstanding regarding the administration of the expropriated zone of the Manchurian railways, and he would attempt to convince us of the necessity of mutual action on the part of Russia and America in Manchurian questions, where they should endeavour to safeguard the principle of the Open Door and of Chinese independence. Simultaneously, the desire became noticeable in Japan,—although at that very period the press constantly published reports of the aggressive intentions of Japan towards Russia,—to arrive at an understanding with us on the Manchurian questions. *Concerning the agreement with China, the Japanese Ambassador attempted to show that the real objective of Japanese politics was not Russia, but China; whilst pointing out the difficulties our policy has to overcome in Manchuria, he tried to convince us that the conformity of Russian and Japanese interests in China should be made evident to the world at large.* In the same man-

ner, Prince Ito's journey had the purpose of bringing a whole series of questions of economic nature between Russia and Japan towards a satisfactory solution. As for China, naturally desirous of safeguarding her rights of sovereignty in Manchuria, the effort to confront Russia and Japan with the other Powers interested in Free Trade in Manchuria was recognizable in Pekin.

All this showed plainly enough that we have arrived at a turning-point in East-Asiatic policy and that the existing *status quo* is no longer in accordance with the interests of three Powers, namely, America, Japan and China.

Indeed, should the American project be realized, the entire political situation in Manchuria would be subjected to a thorough alteration.

Rockhill, at first in personal discussions, and later in the name of his Government, developed a plan which he termed the "commercial neutralisation" of Manchuria. According to this plan all the railways in Manchuria, those existing as well as those planned, should belong to China and at the same time be guaranteed by the Powers, who would simultaneously grant China a loan in order to buy up existing lines and build new ones. *As our standpoint is analogous to that of Japan, and as a rejection or acceptance of the American project would have influenced our relations to Japan, the necessity of placing ourselves into communication with the latter became obvious.* The Emperor [1] gave the Minister of Foreign Affairs instructions to this effect, and the whole question has been investigated by a special Ministerial Council. *Hereupon, we placed ourselves in communication with the Tokio Cabinet and merely informed the American Ambassador that the American proposal would be considered in all its details.*

Our overtures were very favourably received at Tokio. *Komura found it possible to express the conviction that Japan would on no account permit the South Manchurian Railway to pass into foreign hands. In the course of negotiations it was established that for some reason or other the incomplete text of the American proposal had been handed us, as it is pointed out in the proposals submitted at Tokio that the Powers willing to safeguard the commercial neutrality of Manchuria can join the American-English-Chinese convention, should it not be*

[1] Czar Nicholas.

possible to carry out the American project to its full extent. Later, we were also handed the complete text by Rockhill. A similar proposal has been made to England, France and Germany, as well as to Russia and Japan.

Apparently, China has not definitely agreed to the building of the Chinchow-Aigun line, as the confirmation of the Pekin Government has not as yet been received. *On the whole, however, the American project has met with a favourable reception in China and the supposition even exists that it was jointly set up by America and China. As for the other Powers, France considers the American proposal to be impracticable. According to news from America, Germany has declared her agreement in principle, as has England; although up to the present she has given no support whatsoever to the American project. On our pointing out that the participation of England would run counter to our treaty of the year* 1899, *the London Cabinet replied that we were formally in the right, but that the point in question did not deal with the concession for a railway line but with the financing of a Chinese undertaking,* and that the Russian Government itself took up a similar attitude in its endeavours to obtain the co-operation of the Russo-Chinese Bank in the building of the Hankow-Setchuan Railway.

(12) *The Russian Ambassador at Tokio to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 23-*March* 8, 1910.

Komura told me that he shares our views as to the objective of the proposed political understanding between Russia and Japan. *Its basis must consist of the maintenance of the status quo in Manchuria, the definite demarcation of the special Russian and Japanese interests and their protection against aggression on the part of a third Power.* He is prepared to enter upon a discussion of the details. He enquired whether the Russian Government had authorised me to conduct negotiations. I replied that I had been empowered to come to an understanding with him on the general principles of the proposed convention.

(13) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 24-*May* 7, 1910.

The newspapers here are spreading the report that the Russo-Japanese Treaty has been already signed, or, that its signing will take

place within the next ten days. As Komura fears that a premature publication of our intentions might be injurious, he will have an official dementi published in to-morrow's newspapers. **At the same time he requested me to inform you that he regards an acceleration, if possible, of our negotiations to be desirable.**

(14) *The Russian Minister at Pekin to Iswolsky. Telegram, April 29-May 12, 1910.*

China is very much upset by the news of the conclusion of a Russo-Japanese covenant. **If possible, I beg you to acquaint me with details in order to be able to reply to any questions put to me.**

(15) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Strictly Confidential Letter, June* 11-24, 1910. *No.* 760.

Negotiations have been taking place for some time past between the Petersburg and Tokio Cabinets in order precisely to establish, and bring into conformity, their joint interests in Manchuria, so that peace in the Far East may be further secured. *An experience of three years has proved the expediency of the Russo-Japanese Treaty of July* 17-30, 1907,[1] *and the two Governments have now unanimously recognized that the above-mentioned aim can be best attained by a further development of this treaty.*

To-day both Cabinets have come to a perfect understanding and they are about to set their signatures to a public and a secret agreement.[2] *The first promotes closer joint action between Russia and Japan in the question of the Manchurian Railways and confirms anew the firm resolution of both Governments to maintain the status quo in these districts. The Secret Treaty defines more precisely the two spheres of interest, as well as the limitations to which they subject themselves in order to reinforce their mutual relations and to preserve the position proper to them in Manchuria from all interference on the part of other Powers. The Russian Government is convinced that the two treaties, which exclusively serve the purpose of safeguarding the peaceful relations with Japan, contain nothing which could be injurious to British interests. In view of the cordial relations existing between Russia and England, may I request you to bring the*

[1] Delimitation of Russo-Japanese interests in the Far East.
[2] Compare them carefully.

above to the knowledge of Sir Edward Grey and to inform him confidentially of both projects, whilst at the same time expressing the hope that he will regard these two diplomatic documents as a new guarantee of peace and quiet in the Far East.

(16) *Draft of the Public Treaty between Russia and Japan.*[1]

The Russian and the Japanese Governments, faithful to the principles set up in the Treaty of July 17-30, 1907, and desirous of a further development of this Treaty for the maintenance of peace in the Far East, have decided to supplement the above Treaty by the following provisions:

Article 1. For the facilitation of traffic, and for the development of international trade, both parties contract to support each other in the improvement of their railroad connections in Manchuria *and to refrain from all competition injurious to these aims.*[2]

Article 2. Each of the contracting parties undertakes to maintain and observe the *status quo* in Manchuria, as defined in all the treaties, conventions and other agreements that have hitherto been concluded between Russia and Japan, or between these States and China. Copies of these treaties have been exchanged between Russia and Japan.

Article 3. Should the *status quo* as set forth above be threatened in any manner, the two contracting parties shall enter into an exchange of opinions to determine together the measures to be taken for the maintenance of the *status quo.*

(17) *Draft of the Secret Treaty between Russia and Japan.*

To confirm and further develop the provisions of the Secret Treaty of June 17-30, 1907, *the Russian and the Japanese Governments agree to the following provisions:*

Article 1. *Russia and Japan recognize, as the boundary of their specific spheres of interest in Manchuria, the line of demarcation as defined in the supplementary article to the Secret Treaty of* 1907.

[1] The text here given is not the original English text, but an English translation of the original Russian text of the Convention.
[2] A provision the United States objected to.

Article 2. The two contracting parties agree mutually to recognize their special interests in the areas set forth above. *Each of them may also, each within its own sphere of interest, take such measures as shall be deemed necessary for the maintenance and protection of these interests.*

Article 3. *Each party undertakes to place no obstacle of any kind in the way of the confirmation and future development of the special interests of the other party within the boundary-lines of such spheres of interest.*

Article 4. Each of the contracting parties undertakes to refrain from all political action within the sphere of interest of the other party in Manchuria. Furthermore, it has been decided that Russia shall seek no privileges or concessions in the Japanese zone, and Japan none in the Russian zone, that might be injurious to the special interests of either party, and that both Governments are to recognize the rights acquired in their spheres of interest, as defined in Article 2 of the Public Treaty of to-day's date.

Article 5. To ensure the working of the mutual stipulations, both parties will enter into an open and friendly exchange of opinion on all matters concerning their special interests in Manchuria. *In case these special interests should be threatened, the two Governments will agree on the measures that may become necessary for common action or mutual support in order to protect these interests.*

Article 6. The present Treaty will be kept strictly secret by both Governments.

(18) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, June* 12-25, 1910. *No.* 889.

You will receive, by special messenger, instructions as to a statement to be made to Sir Edward Grey concerning a political agreement we are about to conclude with Japan. May I request you to do this not later than Wednesday and immediately to inform me by telegram?

(19) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, June* 15-28, 1910. *No.* 157.

Your letter No. 760 received. Please, inform me whether the Japanese Government is aware of our London declaration.

(20) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 15-28, 1910. *No.* 160.

Your letter No. 760 received.

I have just carried out the instructions given me. *Grey is very much satisfied with the step taken by the Russian Government and requests me to forward you his best thanks.*[1] *He has watched with satisfaction the development of good relations between Russia and Japan within the last three years and is extremely satisfied by the confirmation of his observations as furnished by me.* England's political interests in the Far East consist in the maintenance of peace, just as her trade interests are based on the principle of the Open Door. Grey requested me to couch his statements in the friendliest and heartiest terms.

(21) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, June* 16-29, 1910. *No.* 911.

Your telegram No. 157 received. *The declarations to the British and French Governments were made with full knowledge of the Tokio Cabinet, and your Japanese colleague will have received the same instructions as yourself.*[2]

(22) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Pekin to Iswolsky. Report, July* 1-14, 1910.

. . . . . The only peaceful means of exercising pressure on China at present is to lay down a double track on our Siberian Railway. *This measure alone is feared by the Chinese, as they foresee its consequences, and that our relations in general to the Chinese Empire might be determined thereby.* All other similar measures which have been already taken into consideration owing to the scarcely friendly attitude of the Chinese Government towards us, such as for example an export embargo on grain, either possess no inherent importance, or they are both dangerous and injurious to ourselves in regard to our trade relations with China.

[1] For having learned the details of both treaties, the public and the *secret* one.

[2] There was a complete meeting of minds in Tokio, St. Petersburg, London and Paris. This method of making an act, or a series of actions by the Entente group seem to be the initiative or effort of a single member of that group, has become known as the "mechanism of the Entente"—a phrase invented by Lord Northcliffe.

Should a military action, in so far as it is prepared and used with caution, be looked upon not only as a means but as the aim of policy, then a diplomatic action need be considered only to that degree in which it bears the character of a direct threat. This latter measure, now that we have arrived at a close understanding with Japan, thanks to your efforts, will have a very strong moral effect: the question however is how to make best use of it.

Personally, I cannot imagine that the Chinese should be so permanently influenced by a diplomatic action as to show sudden, lasting and unconditional compliance. In practice, therefore, we must use pressure in every individual case.[1] It is possible that concessions may thus be attained from China, but whenever the Chinese Government considers our demands to be too heavy, or an encroachment upon its rights, it will endeavour to put up as prolonged a resistance as possible against us. . . .

It is all the more important for us to regard the Chinese problems from a correct perspective, since, should the system of compromises between ourselves and China be admitted, it would be necessary for us to alter the nature of our policy in China *and to take more and more economic, and not territorial, acquisitions into consideration. Hitherto, these latter have, either directly or indirectly been placed in the foreground of our efforts.* Should we be sufficiently powerful economically, it would be simpler to direct all our efforts to the conclusion of an economic treaty. If, however, as I fear, we should by so doing be only of service to the foreigners, and ourselves be unable to secure any profits from what we had achieved, (thus we have for instance in reality been unable during the last thirty years to profit by the extraordinary advantages embodied in the Commercial Treaty of 1881) *then there is in my opinion no reason to depart from the basis of the policy we have followed hitherto; that of territorial acquisitions. We must precisely define our intentions and determine what is most advantageous to us and easiest to attain. Perhaps the anticipated conflicts,*[2] *and the expiration of the Commercial Treaty of the year* 1881, *will afford us the possibility of again obtaining possession of the Ili territory we ceded in* 1881.

[1] These two sentences are the *credo* of diplomacy and the reader will find their substance presented again and again in these documents. Their quintessence is: Might is right.

[2] Anticipated by Russia and Japan, because planned by them.

(23) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister of Finance. Confidential Letter, Nov.* 6-19, 1910.

The telegrams of our foreign representatives will have acquainted you with the question of a Chinese loan. On November 3 of the current year, we received an enquiry from the American Ambassador here. Mr. Rockhill, however, confined himself to informing us that the Chinese Government intended to take up a loan of 50 million dollars in America and to use this sum for a reform of the currency in China and for the commercial development of Manchuria; *he spoke at the time neither of guarantees of any kind nor of the appointment of an American to the Chinese Ministry of Finance.*[1] *Later on, however, he informed me that the American banking-houses insist upon China's providing definite guarantees and on the appointment of an American. The Ambassador assured me that his Government would welcome the participation of Russian capital in the loan.*

It may be inferred from all this that the American Government desires to use foreign, not American, money in order to attain a double profit: Firstly a commission for the American banks and, secondly, the appointment of an American who will in all probability attempt to exert not only economic but also political influence.

The Japanese Ambassador here, who has arrived at the same conclusion, has openly expressed to me his dissatisfaction at the course the problem of the penetration of foreign capital into China has taken. Motono expressed as his personal opinion the idea that Russia and Japan might jointly guarantee a loan. I drew his attention to the fact that it was most improbable that the Chinese Government, finding already burdensome the Russian and Japanese influence on all Chinese affairs, would declare itself willing to strengthen still further its dependence on Russia and Japan. I drew his attention to the fact that should the Americans allude to the obligation on the part of China to begin the currency reform, as contained in the Chinese-American Treaty of 1903, *a similar obligation is embodied in the agreements made by England and Japan with China in* 1902 *and* 1903. These two Governments consequently possess full power to demand a

[1] As Russia and Great Britain had done in the case of Persia, where M. Bizot, a Frenchman, and Morgan Shuster, an American, acted in succession as financial advisers.

share in the control of China's financial affairs. *Such a demand on the part of Japan, especially if England should follow suit, would cause the Chinese and Americans to renounce their idea of placing the Chinese finances under American control.* Even should this not be the case, the presence of a Japanese and English Financial Councillor would still counteract the exclusively political influence the Americans are now apparently striving for in China.

(24) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London to Sazonoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Letter, Nov.* 10-23, 1910.

The French Ambassador here has told me that during a conversation with Knox, the latter, in his excitement, admitted that the sum of 50 *million dollars would be in itself too small for the financial reform and other administrative measures in China, and that the Americans in reality desired to use this sum for the building of railways and the penetration of Manchuria.*[1] *Knox intends to set up resistance in Manchuria, directed in the first place against Russia and Japan, as well as their allies, France and England.*

The French Government does not deem it possible financially to support an enterprise which is directed against Russia. Cambon[2] *told this to Sir A. Nicolson and asked him whether the British Government would not consider it possible to refrain from rendering assistance to the American endeavours directed against Russia and Japan.* Sir A. Nicolson replied that Grey would most probably be willing to inquire at Washington whether the proposed loan was really destined for the reform of China's finances; should this not be the case England would scarcely participate in the loan. *In any case, he regards exclusively American negotiations with the Chinese Government as inexpedient.*

So far as Cambon is informed, the Americans are pursuing political ends—they wish to enact the rôle of arbitrator between China and the European Powers, as they do not intend to negotiate the fourth part of the loan, which falls to their share, in America, but to distribute it amongst England, France and Germany.

[1] The poorest sort of statesmanship, if true.
[2] Paul, French ambassador at London.

Cambon inclines to the opinion that the American Government, in its displeasure at the failure of its plans last year, now seeks to call forth new complications in China, at the same time emphasizing its magnanimous attitude towards that country.

(25) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador in London. Strictly Confidential Letter. Nov. 27-Dec. 10, 1910. No. 1369.*

I am sending you a copy of a strictly confidential report from our Minister at Pekin, No. 104, *in which the plan is developed of putting pressure upon China in order to place China under obligation to leave the status quo in Mongolia unaltered and to take no military measures there.*

The whole question is a very difficult one, and its solution in the one or the other direction will touch the very core of our relations with China. The project however is of like importance from an international point of view: *its carrying-out depends, as our Minister has already remarked, upon a previous understanding with the other Powers, principally England and Japan.*

Before entering on the subject in its entirety, I wish to know to what degree we shall be able to rely on the support, or, at least, on the concurrence of the two Powers above mentioned. May I request you, therefore, without giving the British Government any information about our plan, to submit to me your observations on the general development of British policy in East Asiatic questions: Can we rely in general, and under what conditions, on English support, should the plan proposed by our Minister really be carried into effect?

With regard to the remark of our Minister as to withdrawing our refusal to permit *scientific expeditions* to Tibet [1] and rendering this the starting point of our negotiations with the London Cabinet, I should like to inform you that the Russian Government raises no objections to this. *Nevertheless, I must ask you to inform me whether it would not be best to wait with our acquiescence to the English proposal until we have learnt England's attitude in the question I have raised.*

[1] Sazonoff wished to be assured as to the real nature of these "scientific expeditions" to Tibet. A British protectorate over Tibet was the result of Russia's acquiescence.

(26) *Protocol of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council at St. Petersburg. Nov.* 19-*Dec.* 2, 1910.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs reports that the negotiations on the renewal of the Commercial Treaty with China will probably cause great difficulties, as the Chinese Government reveals the intention of bringing forward an entire series of political questions, besides those of a purely commercial nature. This has induced the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to exclude the purely political problems and to make them the subject of separate negotiations preceding those actually concerning the Commercial Treaty itself. Under these circumstances, a speedy solution of the political problems becomes essential. *It will be necessary to clothe the claims against China in the form of an ultimatum, which in turn will necessitate supporting the Russian claims by force of arms. The Minister of Foreign Affairs desires to learn the opinion of the Ministerial Council, whether such a program would be approved from a military and financial point of view, and whether the military measures on the Chinese frontier proposed for this purpose would find the sanction of the Government.*

The Prime Minister points out the difference prevailing between the attitude of the War Ministry and that of the Foreign Ministry. Whilst the latter speaks only of safeguarding our rights as stipulated in the Treaty, *the War Minister recommends as necessary on strategic grounds the annexation of North Manchuria by Russia. Should the standpoint of the War Minister be accepted, all preparatory measures for the annexation of this country should be taken without further loss of time. From a general point of view, such action does not meet with the approval of the Prime Minister; should the Minister of War be correct in his assertion that we run a risk of being supplanted, first in Manchuria, and later in the Ussuri District also, if we do not make use of the present favourable moment, then this consideration must determine us to make all provisions for the annexation of Northern Manchuria, as the possession of this territory is an imperative necessity to us for the defence of our East Asiatic possessions.*

The Minister of War confirmed the fact that, according to his information, Russia's position in Manchuria is an extremely difficult one. Japan is taking open measures for the annexation of Southern

Manchuria. China has begun to reorganize her military forces in Manchuria with the intention of dislocating our railway communications in Manchuria before we are in a position to guard them by a rapid strengthening of our Frontier Corps, stationed along the whole line. The progressing colonisation of Manchuria by the Chinese likewise follows strategic aims. *Under these circumstances, the concentration of our army is only possible westward of the Khinganic Hills, from where our troops can reach the theatre of war only after a most difficult passage of the range. The Minister of War is of the opinion that the present moment is all the more favourable for us to take possession of Manchuria in agreement with Japan, as the Japanese are very evidently preparing the annexation of Southern Manchuria.* Thus an end would be put to the presence of Chinese military in the vicinity of our railways, and also to Chinese colonisation. Should the anexation of North Manchuria be impossible at the present time, then it would be better for us voluntarily to withdraw from this territory before we are forced to do so.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that he was perfectly convinced that the annexation of Northern Manchuria was for us an imperative necessity, *but he regarded the present moment as unfavourable, as America, England and perhaps even Japan would oppose our plans and we could expect no support from any quarter whatsoever. He did not regard our strategic position in the Far East as endangered: an attack on the part of Japan was not to be expected, as we had just concluded a political agreement with this country, and Japan was furthermore fully occupied in the absorption of Korea.* As for the Chinese troops: They are not yet strong enough in Manchuria, and financial considerations prevent China from undertaking a rapid organisation of her army. Finally, we are separated by Southern Manchuria from the main body of the Chinese army concentrated in Petchili: the Japanese naturally would not permit the passage of the Chinese army through their sphere of interest. Many years will pass before China could become dangerous to us.

The Minister of Commerce pointed out that the annexation of Northern Manchuria is connected with the risk of a great war. Russia, at the present moment, is however not prepared for this.

The Minister of Finance pointed to the continuous nervousness prevalent in our East Asiatic borderlands. Three years ago, the Governor-General of the Amur Territory pronounced war with Japan to be unavoidable; our relations to this State are at present, however, perfectly normal. One must take into consideration who could eventually threaten us in the Far East. *The conclusion of the Treaty of June 21 testifies to our confidence in Japanese policy, and we need not reckon with a war with this country in the immediate future.* For the same reason the possibility of a joint Japanese-Chinese attack on us is also excluded. China alone remains, but for the insignificant Chinese forces, the 29,000 men of the Frontier Corps amply suffice, supported by the military districts of Irkutsk and the Amur Territory, to protect the East-China Railway from any sudden interruptions.

Kokowtzeff [1] is all the more in agreement with the standpoint of the Minister of Foreign Affairs as it fully expresses the policy he has himself followed during the past four years. We must naturally safeguard by all means in our power our covenanted rights in China. *If necessary we must resort to imposing our Consular representatives by force, or to similar energetic measures.* Experience has taught us that China has always yielded, when we, knowing ourselves to be in the right, addressed to her categorical demands. Such policy will always meet with the approval of public opinion in Russia and will call forth no open opposition on the part of the other Great Powers. The violent separation of a province from China can not be justified by legal considerations. We know how expensive such annexations prove to be in the long run and to what international complications they lead. The purpose of such annexation would not be understood in Russia.

Naturally, it would be impossible to declare that Northern Manchuria will never be annexed by Russia; political events in future might make it necessary for us to do so, should the political situation be favourable at the time. By safeguarding at present all our treaty privileges in Manchuria we can best prepare for the possibility just referred to. We must not withdraw from Manchuria, but attempt

[1] Russian prime minister.

to strengthen our position in this country in order to fulfil our mission[1] *there in the proper manner at the given time.*

Whilst thus supporting the Minister of Foreign Affairs' political program, Kokowtzeff is however of opinion that we shall not be able to avoid a tariff war with China, as this country, at the revision of the Petersburg Commercial Treaty, will set up claims that are wholly unacceptable to us, until we prove to China that such obstinacy will lead to no results.

The Minister of Trade reported on the preparatory work of the commission for the revision of the Commercial Treaty. This Commission regards a tariff war as possible, if not probable. Hence it is most desirable to separate all political questions from the rest and insist on their speedy settlement.

Taking all these points into consideration, the Ministerial Council accepts the proposal of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. *So far as Northern Manchuria is concerned, the Ministerial Council regards an annexation as dangerous at the present moment, but is of opinion that the trend of events may force Russia to this step. All Ministries must therefore be guided by the consideration that our stipulated privileges in Northern Manchuria must be maintained in full to permit eventually an annexation at some future date.*

The Ministerial Council sanctions the measures proposed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to exert pressure upon China. In case of necessity however there must be no shrinking from forceful measures. The Ministerial Council furthermore pointed out that proceedings should be taken against the sale of cheap alcohol on the Amur, as this traffic has a demoralising influence on the Russian population.

(27) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Tokio. Telegram, Nov. 27-Dec. 10, 1910. No. 1742.*

The next courier will remit you the report of an Extraordinary Ministerial Council in which it was decided to protect our stipulated privileges in China and even to make use of such measures against the Chinese Government as military demonstrations on the frontier and the enforced instalment of our consuls in dis-

[1] Russia had missions everywhere, despite the fact that her moujik population was the most oppressed, neglected, exploited and backward in Europe at the time.

tricts to which the Chinese denied them admittance. *Yesterday I informed the Japanese Ambassador that the time had come to demand from Japan the fulfilment of the promises made us on the occasion of the annexation of Korea. The Japanese Ambassador assured us that his Government recognized our right to take all actions we deem necessary and that they would give us every support.* I request you to make a similar verbal statement to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and to send me a telegraphic report on the result of your interview.

(28) *The Russian Ambassador at Tokio to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 4-17, 1910. *No.* 206.

Your telegram No. 1742 received.

On Komura receiving my communication, he informed me that the Japanese Ambassador at St. Petersburg had only given him a general outline of his conversation with you, without mentioning the reply he made. Komura's standpoint is as follows:

On the conclusion of the last treaty between Russia and Japan, the Chinese Government and the Chinese nation showed themselves inclined to be very distrustful of these two nations.

Powerful pressure exerted by us on China might therefore result in a change of China's policy and drive this country into the arms of America and Germany. China's very weakness is dangerous, and, although it is doubtful whether America and Germany would conclude a political treaty with China, we must foresee the fact that our pressure on China will afford the two Powers above-mentioned the possibility of securing material advantages for themselves and a privileged position in Pekin.

Komura therefore hopes that Russia will bear in mind the possibility of such dangerous results. There are still several questions for Japan to regulate in Manchuria, but she is attempting to dispel China's distrust and to be very moderate in her transactions. As Komura is convinced of the solidarity of Russian and Japanese interests in the Far East, he is desirous of attracting our attention to the fact that China's present position necessitates great patience and precaution on our part. Replying to my question, whether Russia may reckon on Japan's support at Pekin, as promised by the Japanese Ambassador at St. Petersburg,

Komura said that Japan was willing, in principle, to uphold us in every individual case on our submitting to her the details of the same.

(29) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Pekin. Telegram, Dec.* 10-23, 1910. *No.* 1793.

The present state of affairs does not appear to render it desirable to enter into a compromise with China. May I request you to inform verbally the Chinese Minister that the Chinese reply cannot satisfy us and that we must take more extensive measures. We do not need, however, to reject the Chinese attempts to meet us at least halfway. *For your personal information I must add that we have, together with the War Ministry, begun the concentration of our troops in Djarkend and Ussin.*

(30) *The Russian Minister at Pekin to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 11-24, 1910. *No.* 645.

The submitting by us of details of contentious questions in China to the Japanese Government would certainly lead to the direct intervention on the part of Japan in matters we have hitherto preserved from all foreign interference. I foresee that this will greatly injure our policy in China.

(31) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Pekin. Telegram, Jan.* 24-*Feb.* 6, 1911.

Should China reject our ultimatum, we intend to make a military demonstration at Ili and not carry out the occupation of the Uriankhai Territory. The military units necessary for this will only be available by the first of March. Until then it does not appear desirable to allow our troops to advance across the Chinese frontier on Ili, as we have to take into consideration the possibility of a set-back near the town of Suidun.

We therefore intend to present the ultimatum to China at the beginning of February, without setting a time-limit, that is to say, before the notice of termination of the St. Petersburg Commercial Treaty on the part of China may be expected, in order not to let it appear as though our ultimatum were the reply to China's notification.

Should the ultimatum be rejected, we shall repeat it and set March 1 as the date of its fulfilment. Should the Chinese never-

theless give notice of termination of the Commercial Treaty, we shall oppose its revision until China shall agree to accept our demands.

(32) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb. 7-20,* 1911. No. 43.

Public opinion in England has hitherto paid little attention to our difficulties in China and no concern exists here. Apart from the first article in the "Times," none of the papers have occupied themselves further with this topic. An article in the "Times" of to-day expresses the expectation that the Chinese reply, in the form it was telegraphed to London by the British correspondent, would allow the hope that a peaceful adjustment may be arrived at. Grey has not spoken to me on this matter.

(33) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Feb.* 8-21, 1911. *No.* 172.

Our Minister at Pekin has submitted to us the reply of the Chinese Government to our ultimatum. This reply is of an accommodating nature and can be regarded as satisfactory on the whole, although several obscure points still remain, which will form the subject of further negotiations.

(34) *The Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Neratoff, to the Russian Minister at Pekin. Telegram, March* 19-*April* 1, 1911. *No.* 358.

The acute conflict between ourselves and China that has just been settled has again revived the question of the safeguarding of our Eastern Chinese Railway lines and of our position in Manchuria itself. Although General Khorwat's report points out the exaggeration of the fears expressed in the press and lays stress on the fact that only weak Chinese detachments are stationed in the immediate vicinity of our railway lines, yet the Ministry of War thinks it necessary to increase our troops in the expropriated zone and to concentrate powerful units in Tsitsikar and Echo.

Our negotiations with the Japanese Government permit us to hope that Japan will raise no objections to the plans of our Ministry of War.

These measures are to form the subject of a special conference of Ministers, and I beg you to inform me by telegram of your opinion. It would be especially desirable for us to receive precise information on Chinese and above all Japanese military measures in Manchuria.

(35) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at Tokio. Telegram, April* 16-29, 1911. *No.* 518.

I have pointed out to the Japanese Ambassador here the fears China's activity in Manchuria has aroused in us, especially the Chinese colonisation, the issuing of a loan and the re-inforcement of the Chinese forces in this province. Our military circles are of the opinion that these latter are already sufficiently strong to destroy our railway communications. I asked the Ambassador what his Government's standpoint is regarding China's military measures.

Motono told me in reply that the Chinese troops in Manchuria, both as to numbers and quality constituted no danger. *He thinks it quite out of the question that the Chinese would attack either us or the Japanese. The only danger he can foresee would come from America whose fleet in the Pacific, on the completion of the Panama Canal, will be so powerful that the Japanese fleet might undertake a defensive action,*[1] *but certainly not attack. The Ambassador believes that Russia and Japan will have to regulate definitely their position in China before the beginning of this period.* He is willing to act as mediator to lay our wishes before the Japanese Government, but is at the same time of the opinion that the negotiations on measures to be taken for the safeguarding of our interests in Manchuria must take place at Tokio. I request you to inform the Minister of Foreign Affairs[2] of our fears regarding the further development of the Chinese Army, and to ask the Japanese Government as to its attitude concerning our idea of an agreement between Russia, Japan and China for the exact determination of the strength and distribution of the Chinese troops in the district of the Manchurian railways, thus further developing the main-

[1] In the political sense an attack may be the best sort of "defensive action." Such was the claim of the Japanese after they had, without notice, taken the initiative in the Russo-Japanese war.

[2] Of Japan.

tenance of the *status quo* in Manchuria, as set forth in our agreement of June 21, 1910.

As my conversations with the Japanese Ambassador were only of a preparatory nature, I must beg you on your part, to refrain from any concrete proposal. Please ascertain in the first place what aims are pursued in the instructions that have been given to the Japanese representative, who has just returned to Pekin.

(36) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Neratoff. Letter, July* 4-17, 1911.

I have just had a strictly confidential conversation with Sir A. Nicolson[1] on the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. *I told him we were not surprised at the altered text of the treaty, as this is apparently a result of the proposed Arbitration Treaty with the United States.*[2] *As for the prolongation of the Treaty itself, Russia was unable to forget that the original Treaty of Alliance represented a precautionary measure against an eventual conflict between Russia and England,*[3] *as Lord Landsdowne himself once admitted in a private letter.*

Sir Arthur replied that nobody in England believed in the possibility of a return to the former relations between Russia and England, and that such considerations had not played any part whatsoever in the renewal of the Treaty with Japan. The point in question was in reality a most delicate one, with special reference to the colonies, i.e. Australia. In view of the fact that the laws in the British colonies show but little consideration for the yellow race, a lapsing of the Treaty might have led to serious friction, which would have meant continuous disquietude for England, even if it did not embody a direct danger of war.

The Treaty that has just been renewed is a guarantee against all possible accidental occurrences and from this point of view its renewal has met with lively approval in England. He pronounces it to be a guarantee against Japan's ill-will caused by the bad treatment of the Japanese, especially in Australia.

[1] Under-secretary for foreign affairs of Great Britain.
[2] Evidently the old text contained provisions that were influenced or made unnecessary by the treaty referred to.
[3] Directed against Russia.

Sir Arthur added that another consideration had been of weight also. *Since the coming into force of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, England has been able considerably to reduce her naval forces in the Far East and to strengthen her fleet in like measure in European waters. Through this England possessed an important guarantee for the maintenance of peace in the Far East, and has been enabled to strengthen her naval forces there where they might eventually be needed.*[1]

(37) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador in London. Strictly Confidential Letter, Jan.* 12-25, 1912. *No.* 33.

The change of Government imminent in China leads us to the consideration that we must use this favourable moment for the regulation of a whole series of questions in abeyance between Russia and China.

I have expressed this idea in a memorandum and have submitted it to His Majesty. The Emperor has been graciously pleased to confirm my considerations. In bringing this to your personal knowledge, I nevertheless add that concrete decisions of the Russian Government can only take place after we have arrived at an understanding with the Tokio Cabinet.

(38) *Memorandum by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Jan.* 10-23, 1912.

The news received from Pekin heralds the imminent abdication of the reigning dynasty and the transference of sovereignty to Yuan Shikai. The question thus arises of the recognition of the new Government by the other Powers. Our Chargé d'Affaires has already been able to establish the fact that the representatives of the States chiefly interested in China deem it necessary to render a recognition of the Yuan Shikai Government dependent on the safeguarding of the rights of foreigners in China.

It is to be assumed that Yuan Shikai will be forced to fulfil these demands in one form or another as his Government, which does not meet with approval in all parts of China, is badly in need

[1] Against Germany, as shown in other documents.

of foreign assistance in the shape of loans for the suppression of the disturbances. Russia and Japan, as China's neighbours, possessing wider political interests in this country than all other Powers, are of especial importance to Yuan Shikai. *Hence, Russia and Japan must use the present favourable moment to fortify their position in China and in this wise prevent the Chinese Government from continually opposing the political interests of Russia and Japan as has been the case during the past few years.*

It was this resistance on China's part which at the time evoked in the Russian Government the idea of strengthening Russia's position in the Far East by force of arms and by the annexation of divers Chinese territories so that Russia need no longer fear complications in Eastern Asia, should she be compelled to try her strength elsewhere. The separation and annexation of further territory was, however, always looked upon by us as an extreme measure. The present moment would appear to be the given one for the attainment of the desired result by diplomatic means, without forcible annexation of Chinese territories.

The Manchurian question occupies a first place. It was here in particular that we had to fear China's resistance. We must now endeavor, therefore, to protect ourselves against a hostile action on the part of China in Manchuria. As our interests in Manchuria coincide with those of Japan, and as we have concluded political agreements with this country in 1907 and 1910, our task will be greatly facilitated by co-operation with Japan. It must be taken into account that both, Yuan Shikai as well as the revolutionary party in China, have indicated their eventual readiness to acknowledge our position in Manchuria.

We must for this purpose reach an understanding with Japan as to our mutual wishes. We for our part must try to obtain an assurance from China to enter into an agreement with us on the following points:

1.) The construction of railways in Manchuria and in the adjoining parts of Inner Mongolia.

2.) The strength and distribution of the Chinese fighting forces in Manchuria.

3.) An acknowledgement on the part of the Chinese Government that the Eastern Chinese Railway possesses not only free-

dom of action in purely technical railway questions, *but can also assume the entire administration in the expropriated zone.*[1]

These three points, precisely formulated, must be placed before China.

Of these three points only the question of railways can be of direct interest to the Japanese; China's armaments can not call forth any concern on their part,[2] nor have they any reasons to be dissatisfied with the condition of affairs in the expropriated zone of the Southern Manchurian Railway. It must be foreseen that the Japanese will bring the recognition of Yuan Shikai's Government into connection with the question of the term of lease of the Kwantung Peninsula, which is of great importance to them. They will try to obtain for themselves a longer period than twenty-five years. Such a demand does not run counter to our interests and we would have no reason to oppose it.

Another question we should attempt to regulate on the occasion of the recognition of the new Chinese Government is the revision of the St. Petersburg Commercial Treaty. Should we succeed in retaining the fundamental principles at the renewal, which form the basis of our political activity in Outer China, then we should not only attain the protection of our economic interests but also assist the future development of the Mongolian question on the lines of Mongolia's existence as an autonomic component part of the Chinese realm. The definite settlement of this difficult question, which especially affects Russian interests, must be postponed to a future date, *for we have to take into account our political interests which, in principle, are directly opposed to the maintenance of China's territorial integrity.*[3] In this way the Chinese will be prevented from re-establishing their authority over these districts.

If we proceed in agreement with Japan, we shall be able to reckon all the sooner upon the fulfilment of our wishes as we succeed in assuring ourselves of the support of our French ally, just as England might also give her support to Japan.

[1] Government by railroad, in favor of Russia.
[2] Which was not the view Russia took for herself.
[3] A very frank statement. Sazonoff, though not in favor of the "forcible annexation of Chinese territories," was committed to swallowing the Chinese empire at one gulp—by diplomatic means.

(39) *M. Sazonoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Confidential Letter, Dec.* 14-27, 1911. *No.* 1331.

During my last stay at Paris the director of the *Banque Indo-Chine* and the *Comptoir National d'Escompte* pointed to the desirability of a Russian and a Japanese financial group entering the "Syndicate of Four." Our two groups would receive the same shares as the others. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs,[1] and the two directors above-mentioned, *declared that we should thus have the main influence within the Syndicate, as the Russian group would proceed jointly with the French and Japanese groups, and frequently with the English group as well.*

I made no definite reply and reserved to myself the right of discussing the question with our Minister of Finance. But in my conversation with the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, I told him I saw little use in our joining the Syndicate, as we would probably only be in solidarity with the French group, whilst the Japanese and English would frequently act quite independently, *and the Germans, and the Americans above all, take up an attitude inimical to us. I also believe, although I did not tell the French Minister so, that the French group is chiefly actuated by a desire to achieve financial advantages and would not help us to counteract projects that might be disagreeable to us but which might promise them financial advantages. I furthermore expressed my doubts to the Minister whether we and the Americans could participate in one and the same financial action in China, as the American banking houses pursue political aims in the Far East which are distinctly hostile to us.*

The previous correspondence has acquainted you with the negative attitude of the Russian Government towards the Anglo-French-German-American Syndicate. We desire to break up this Syndicate by urging the French group to withdraw, and we should only be willing to enter the Syndicate were this latter so transformed that a privileged position would be granted us in the enterprises north of the Great Wall of China. The proposals made to me by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs would by no means fulfil these aims, as we should not be able to protect our sphere of influence in China from the penetration of financial interests inimical to ourselves and even our vote would have no decisive influence on the decisions of the Syndicate.

[1] M. Pichon.

(40) *Sazonoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, March* 5-18, 1912. *No.* 475.

If we allow the International Syndicate to grant China a loan even now, before Yuan Shikai's Government has been officially recognized by the Powers, then the question of recognition will have been positively decided before we have had an opportunity of formulating the proposed political conditions. State interests would thus be subordinated to the private interests of banking-houses.

Such activity on the part of the Syndicate would enable the Asiatic realm to arm itself against European States. Russia, being China's nearest neighbour, would be the first to feel this and hence would be forced to devote her entire attention to the Far East. *We must therefore ask ourselves whether it would not be more advantageous for us to take up a separate attitude in this question and to demand that China renounce all financial operations which we regard as harmful, and in case of a Chinese refusal, to support our demands by forcible measures. I request you to confer with Grey in this sense and to ask him to consider whether it could be in the interest of the Triple Entente Powers, that Russia should have to divert all her attention and power to the Far East.*[1]

(41) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 9-22, 1912. *No.* 508.

I did not contemplate an immediate conflict with China in my telegram No. 475. *I simply foresee the possibility of a military action,* should the Chinese Government, whilst paying no attention to our protest, insist on the realisation of a financial operation proposed to her by the International Syndicate. We do not, however, refuse officially to join the Syndicate, *but can only do this upon conditions that do not render it necessary for us to detract our attention from our interests in Europe and the Balkans in order to concentrate upon the defence of our position in the Far East. We are of the opinion that this is a matter of common interest to the Powers of the Triple Entente.*[2]

[1] Sazonoff knew the telling effect this statement would have upon Grey. Every man Russia had in arms in the Far East was a rifle less on the German frontier.

[2] Participation for Russia meant an investment of capital and Russia had little of this, when her rich ally, France, had tied the purse strings, as she had in this case by her own participation.

(42) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April 7-20, 1912. No. 716.*

On the occasion of the acknowledgement by England of our special interests in China, Lord Morley set a limit to these by referring to our interests beyond the Great Wall which arise out of our treaties with China. This limitation is not in accordance with our point of view. *Geographical position and economical development draw these districts more and more towards Russia; as a result of this we have to deal with particular circumstances, and our political interests have not always found expression in our treaties with China.* May I request you to bring this point to the knowledge of the British Government in order to avoid any misunderstanding with regard to the support we expect from the London Cabinet, should we take part in the Chinese Reorganisation Syndicate?

(43) *Report of the Russian Minister at Pekin to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; May 1-14, 1912. No. 32.*

In my former telegrams I expressed the opinion that it would be impossible for us to solve the Mongolian problem by purely diplomatic means, *and that we should have to give military emphasis to our demands.*

In continuation of my earlier reports, I believe I may inform you to-day that I have gained the conviction from discussions with my foreign colleagues that we need at present fear no opposition on the part of the foreign Powers, should we deem it necessary to take the above-mentioned military measures in Northern Manchuria, Mongolia and in West China.

Our Chargé d'Affaires informed you in his letter of March 3d that the American Representative categorically declared that his instructions contained nothing which would cause him to thwart our actions in Mongolia and Manchuria. The American Representative also expressed himself in the same terms to the British Minister. This caused Sir John Jordan to inform me that no other Power would attempt to oppose our measures.[1]

"You can now undoubtedly proceed without anxiety in West China and Outer Mongolia," my English colleague told me, "and

[1] There being no intimation as to Sir John's authority for such a sweeping statement, it must be accepted that he acted either upon his own initiative or upon instruction from London, paralleling Mr. Rockhill's orders from Washington.

will only have to take Japanese interests and desires into account in Manchuria."

This is also the opinion of the majority of my other colleagues.

(44) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, June 19-July 2, 1912. No. 1233.*

Personal. Confidential.

The intention exists of signing a secret convention with Japan with regard to our spheres of interest in Inner Mongolia. In agreement with the Japanese Government we communicate the text of the projected document to the French and British representatives.[1] *The Japanese Government will send a similar note to Paris and London.*

(45) *Draft of the Secret Convention between Russia and Japan in regard to Mongolia.*[2]

In order to more exactly determine and to complete the provisions of the Secret Treaties of July 17-30, 1907, and June 21-July 1, 1910, and to prevent the possibility of any misunderstanding with regard to their special interests in Manchuria and Mongolia, the Russian and the Japanese Governments have decided to lengthen the line of demarcation defined in the amendment of the Treaty of June 17-30, 1907, and to draw up the confines of the spheres of their special interests in Inner Mongolia. The following has therefore been agreed to:

Article 1. Starting from the intersection of the Tola-Ho River and the 122. Meridian east of Greenwich, the demarcation line follows the course of the Oulountchourh and Moushisha Rivers to the water-shed of the Moushisha and Haldaitai Rivers; from there on it follows the border-lines of the Hei-Loung-Chiang Province and Inner Mongolia to the most extreme frontier point of Inner and Outer Mongolia.

Article 2. Inner Mongolia is divided into two parts: One to the East, the other one to the West of the Pekin Meridian. The Japanese Government undertakes to recognize and observe the special interests of Russia in Inner Mongolia to the West of the

[1] Showing that this was in reality an Entente action—the "mechanism of the Entente" in operation.

[2] The text here given is not the original English text, but a translation of the original Russian text of the Convention.

above-mentioned Meridian; the Russian Government undertakes the same obligation in respect to the Japanese interests east of the above-mentioned Meridian.

Article 3. This convention will be kept strictly secret by the two contracting parties.[1]

(46) *The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Russian Consul-General in Ourga. Aug.* 18-31, 1912. *No.* 1694.

The War Minister considers it necessary to equip the Mongolians with modern rifles on due payment. In forwarding this communication to the Mongolian Ministers,[2] *please prevail on them to prevent the purchase of arms from abroad. Also point out to them that the Russian rifles are not to serve for the armament of Inner Mongolia, as this would be useless, since the Chinese are unquestionably superior in military strength in this part of Mongolia.* The arms are for the protection of Khalkha and the adjoining districts of Western Mongolia, for which purpose the Mongolians can reckon on our support.

(47) *The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Russian Diplomatic Agent in Mongolia. Nov.* 8-21, 1913. *No.* 3179.

To impede so far as possible the export of foreign goods from China to Mongolia, we have ordered our consuls in this territory to refuse permission for the transport of goods on the Caravan Road,[3] *justifying this measure by the statement that an autonomous Mongolia has been created by the declaration of October 23, with regard to which commercial transport could not yet be regulated.*

(48) *The Russian Ambassador at Tokio to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 26-*Dec.* 9, 1913. *No.* 200.

In the course of a lengthy conversation with Motono, I came to the conclusion that Japan does not intend to make us concrete proposals concerning China. *His statements imply that Russia and Japan should make it perfectly plain to the Chinese Government and*

[1] So far as the United States and Germany were concerned.
[2] Russia and Japan had set up a sham government in Mongolia.
[3] Thus closing the "Open Door."

the other Powers that they both possess special interests in Manchuria and Mongolia, which they in no case intend to renounce. Motono is of the opinion that we should mutually oppose the issue of further loans, and in any case refuse participation in these loans, and, if possible, induce France to do the same. *May China be left to her own devices.*[1] *In all other matters concerning China, Russia and Japan must act conjointly with France and England, but the two first-named Powers should arrive at a closer agreement between themselves in order to be constantly and fully informed as to their mutual intentions and views.* Motono does not believe that the new form of Government in Pekin will be of long duration. Replying to my question what intentions Japan harbours concerning Inner Mongolia and Southern Manchuria, he said *the annexation of Southern Manchuria would come about of its own accord in due course, and it was not necessary to hurry about it; concerning Mongolia, he does not believe any definite plans to have been formulated at Tokio.*[2] *All in all, I thought the Ambassador very reasonable, which may perhaps be explained by the fact that it was found impossible to carry out the project of enlarging the Japanese Army, which was a great blow to the military party.*

(49) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Pekin. Telegram, Feb. 24-March 9, 1914. No. 417.*

The British Government has brought forward the question of a revision of our Treaty on Tibet in the sense of an abrogation of the restriction hampering England and the granting of freedom of action in those districts.[3] *I replied that we were willing to enter on an examination of this question, but that we should have to demand other concessions*[4] *in our favour. I request you to telegraph me whether you consider it possible to demand from England any kind of compensation in our sphere of influence. You must not overlook the fact that England primarily placed herself on the basis of mutual recognition of Russia's preferential position in Mongolia and England's in China. We, however, refused such a basis of negotiations, pointing*

[1] China had shown that this was her desire.
[2] Japanese *sang froid.*
[3] Result of the aforementioned "scientific expedition."
[4] Meaning the usual Sazonovian "compensations."

out that Russia already possessed freedom of action in Mongolia when we concluded the Tibet Treaty with England in the year 1907.

(50) *The Russian Minister at Pekin to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb.* 26-*March* 11, 1914. *No.* 104.

The only compensation on the part of England in return for our recognition of her freedom of action and her privileged position in Tibet to which I could point would be her recognition of our exclusive sphere of influence in Northern Manchuria, Mongolia and Western China, with the exception of Kashgar, as well as the undertaking not to hinder us in the execution of our plans in these territories, and herself to pursue no aims which we would have to regard as incompatible with our interests.[1] *Should this present an acceptable basis of compensation, then the English might perhaps enter into a similar undertaking with regard to the Valley of Jansda.*

(51) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Pekin. Telegram, March* 1-14, 1914. *No.* 471.

On careful consideration of our railway policy in Manchuria we think it necessary to obtain a promise from the Chinese Government to grant Russia the preferential right of construction on the following lines:

1. Blagoweschtschensk-Charbin with a branch-line to Tsitsikar.

2. Charbin-Boduno.

3. Inganoffpo-NanTian-Mun on the lower course of the Sungari.

4. Tsitsikar-Boduno.

5. Branch lines to the Chinese Eastern Railway at Barga.[2]

No decision has been arrived at on the financial means for the construction of these lines, but this does not exclude the possibility of forming a separate company similar to the companies of England, France and Belgium, and of carrying out the construction under the

[1] Russia traded territories to Great Britain to which she had no sound claims and *vice versa*—a fair example of the usual sort of international morality subscribed to in those days and by these governments. See Persia.

[2] Russia did not have the money to build these lines, but wanted to get the concessions to bilk the Americans.

same conditions as have of late prevailed in the case of railway construction by foreigners in the interior of China.

As the representatives of the Great Powers secured for themselves, simultaneously with the railway concessions the right of exploiting the natural wealth of China, the Ministerial Council considers it desirable to demand from the Chinese Government, as a matter of principle, their undertaking to ensure to the Russian concessionaires the right of exploitation of the mountain, forest and other wealth attaching to the above lines.

I request you to open negotiations on these lines with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, *whilst pointing out to him that at present we only wish to obtain a general undertaking in the above sense from the Chinese Government.*

(52) *The Russian Minister at Pekin to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 3-16, 1914. *No.* 116.

Your telegram No. 471 received:

I have spoken to the Minister for Foreign Affairs according to my instructions on the question of our railway constructions in Manchuria. He promised to give me an answer after a Cabinet discussion of the matter; in the meantime he restricted himself to the remark that no reference is made concerning an exploitation of natural wealth in the other agreements dealing with construction of railways, *with the exception of the Shantung Railway Treaty with the Germans, who have, however, now renounced their rights in this respect.*[1]

[1] This chapter should explode the fables circulated in the Senate of the United States, at the time the "League of Nations" was debated, that the Germans had obtained their concessions in China in a manner and by means and methods less *moral* than the righteous governments who tore peace-loving China asunder, Japan included.

II

RUSSIAN AND BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN PERSIA

(May 1909—January 1912)

The Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 divided Persia into three zones. The Northern "zone of influence" fell to Russia, the Southern to Great Britain, and a narrow strip across central Persia was known as the "neutral" zone. Justification for the act was found by the British and Russians in the fact that Persia was almost insolvent, and needed reforms of a thorough-going kind, Shah Mahmed Ali having squandered the revenues and wielded the heavy hand of despotism besides. What the Shah did not need for his own extravagant mode of living, the Persian nobles and privileged classes appropriated, the tax-collecting satraps in the provinces turning over to the central government only such moneys as they were obliged to surrender.

Persia, then, was occupied by the British and Russians for the sake of the Persians themselves; such was the claim. As a matter of fact nothing was further from the truth. Russia had looked upon Persia with longing eyes for many years, the bolder of her governing class hoping that Russia would get a "window on the open sea" in the Persian Gulf, with which port a trans-Persian railroad was to connect Russia. Persia, also, was worth while as a territory to be exploited commercially, and last but not least, possession of Persia meant a long step forward in getting to India. Russian leaders were obsessed with the idea that they had a "mission" in India. The Greater Russia of which they on the Neva dreamed was to include all of Asia, and at least all of the Slav countries in the Balkans and Central Europe.

Great Britain, on the other hand, found it necessary to protect her Indian empire. Hitherto that had not always been easy in the direction of Russia.

Relations between Russia and Great Britain were chronically bad. Many critical incidents and crises came from this. Along the border of Afghanistan, trouble was the order of the day, and the building of the Russian railroad line toward Herat gave Great Britain the cue that Russia meant to have a contest for the future control of India. To avert that was considered the first duty of every British citizen even. While the population of India had no assurance whatever that a change of master would in this instance lead to better conditions, British statesmen had to consider that the Russians could make fine promises, which later they need not keep, once the yoke of the Muscovite was upon India. Subject races are all too prone to listen to the words of the tempter, especially when they have reason to feel that things could not be much worse, which in this case would not have been a good reason, taking into account that the Russian government of those days was an institution of indifferent quality, to say the least.

Russia and Great Britain had another reason for establishing themselves in Persia. The policy of "peaceful penetration" of the Germans, a trade matter pure and simple, had been very successful throughout Southwest Asia. Getting the markets of foreign countries is a relatively new conception of imperialism, and a comfortable one. The process is not expensive; as a matter of fact it pays for itself and entails no great diplomatic and military risks, so long as the markets do not have to be defended against political encroachment, as was to be the case as soon as Persia had been divided.

The German merchant had made himself many friends in Southwest Asia. He sold cheaply and was accommodating in the matter of credit. Likewise he bought much raw material. There is no doubt that in the course of two or three decades the commercial prestige of the Germans had grown rapidly in the Near East. The beginnings of German commerce had been humble enough, and as yet German trade equalled by no means the volume of business of the British, Russians and Austrians in the Levant,

but it was increasing rapidly—so rapidly in fact, that Germany thought it well to promote a number of railroad developments in the Ottoman empire, of which the Bagdad railroad was the most extensive, and in point of view of international relations the best known.

The occupation of Persia accomplished, the Russians began to feel more at home there than was relished by the British. The government in London had placed a small garrison in its own zone of influence to protect the British consulates, while the Russians undertook to occupy several Persian towns along the Caspian Sea. Several of the documents deal with this, the British government finding occasion to complain whenever the Russian troops—cossacks—were charged with bad conduct, for which local conditions offered ample opportunity, seeing that some of the Persians resented the occupation of their country by foreign troops.

The German government had declared its disinterestedness when the division of Persia into zones of influence was undertaken, the understanding being that acquiescence would result in a free hand in the Bagdad railroad project, to which Russia and Great Britain had objected hitherto.

Persian financial affairs had been placed in the hands of a financial adviser—a Frenchman by name of Bizot. The country needing money badly, it was decided towards the end of 1909 to float a loan in Europe. The French government permitted the quotation of this loan on the Paris bourse, after an agreement had been reached with the Russians and British that seven other Frenchmen should be employed in the administration of Persian finances. Naturally, the French investors felt that this would be necessary. The Russian and British governments had no reason to object, seeing that they were the political masters in their zones and were tied to France the one by a definite alliance, the other by an *entente* just as efficacious. But the German government raised objection, on the ground that, placing Persia's financial administration entirely in the hands of Frenchmen, was bound to react detrimentally upon German and other foreign, non-Entente, commerce and interests.

Germany had recognized the privileged position of Russia and Great Britain in Persia, but was not willing to have Persia lose the

last vestige of sovereignty, since that meant that German trade might be entirely excluded from the kingdom, considerable displacement to her disadvantage having already taken place. Negotiations resulted, finally, in a compromise to the effect that the financial administration of Persia should be placed in the hands of nationals of neutral states.

The subject being open to discussion now, feeling went so far as to cause the British to veto the suggestion that Belgians be employed—even German Swiss were not thought acceptable. In the end the United States State Department was asked whether it would have objection to an American citizen taking the office. At first the Russians did not object, though before long Sir Edward Grey had to advise the Russian government to be moderate in its objections to the American financial counselor, Mr. Morgan Shuster.

The Persian people had meanwhile overthrown the old government, had established a parliament, and put a son of the Shah on the throne; the affairs of the country to be looked after by a regent until such time that the boy should be able to take the reins of government in his own hands. The parliament began to oppose the plans of the Russians systematically, and had occasion, therefore, to take the side of Mr. Shuster, who seems to have had the interests of Persia at heart, though the Russians feared that he, being pro-British, engaged in activities designed to advance the cause of Great Britain in Persia to the detriment of Russian aspirations.

For a while, Mr. Shuster enjoyed the backing of the British, but Russian pressure was such that Sir Edward Grey, who saw in Persia the very pivot of the Entente, withdrew his support from the American financial adviser. Sir Edward had already placated the Russians in the controversy that arose when Mr. Shuster asked the military attaché of the British legation at Teheran, Major Stokes, to take in hand the organization of a sort of excise police, without which it would have been difficult to collect the revenues that were needed to rehabilitate the Persian state financially. Grey made it impossible for Major Stokes to take the commission by inducing the military not to accept his resignation from the British service. In the end Swedish officers undertook the organization of the excise police.

Mr. Shuster passed under the impression that the Russians were doing everything possible to make his work as difficult as possible, and he had in the Persian parliament a body that thought as he did. There was much friction, and the Russian government availed itself of a trivial incident to force the issue. It sent an ultimatum to the Persian parliament in which the resignation of Mr. Shuster was demanded. The Persian cabinet and parliament rejected the demands made by Sazonoff, with the result that the Russians threw more troops into Persia and had several contingents advance upon the capital. Ultimately the Persian government and parliament decided that the dismissal of the American financial adviser was to be preferred to the further reduction of Persian sovereignty, though before this took place thousands of Persians had been butchered by the Russians with a callousness and brutality of which the telegrams of the Russian vice-roy in the Caucasus are a good illustration. This punishment was visited upon the Persians, despite the fact that Count Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador at London, had to go on record as follows:

"This is all the more deplorable as it was a question of the peaceful local population which on the whole had behaved with civility towards Russia."

It seems that in the operations against the Persian Fidais, guerillas opposed to the Russian invasion, no distinction was drawn, as is shown by the anxiety expressed by Mr. Barclay, at that time the British minister at Teheran.

Though British public opinion condemned the conduct of the Russians, the British government stood idly by. Sir Edward Grey was so concerned with the fate of the Entente, with the two other members of which he had no definite agreements on paper, that he condoned everything the Russians did, even though the British House of Commons grew very tired of his complacency toward a government that was putting Great Britain into one embarrassment after another.

The British public could not understand why Grey should constantly espouse the cause of France and Russia when, seemingly, British interests were not directly involved. The situation was such by the time Mr. Shuster left Persia that it would have taken but little effort to persuade British public opinion into a

rapprochement with Germany, as Count Benckendorff, Russia's able representative in London, had cause to fear. The documents show that Grey had a reason of his own to remain in the camp of the Franco-Russian alliance.

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(53) *Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador in London, to M. Iswolsky, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Letter, May 9-22, 1909.*

The information I receive from all available sources as to the internal state of affairs in Persia is not sufficiently exhaustive to permit me to utter any positive opinion as to how long our troops will continue to remain on Persian territory.[1] Still, the said information is fully adequate to call your attention to the serious political side of this question. There can be no doubt but that the appearance of our armed forces at Tabriz at the very moment desired, and this neither too early, nor too late, has not only accomplished its end, namely to re-establish order and safety in the town, but that thereby also our prestige has been increased and the last doubts as to our real intentions been dispelled, as the advice which, conjointly with England, we have given to the Shah, has thereby been strengthened.

However, I fear and believe that this good impression will be impaired if our troops are left in Persia longer than is absolutely necessary. In the country itself any further measures taken by us would be looked upon with suspicion by all political parties, and this suspicion would weaken our moral influence, and we should find ourselves in a very involved position: Any vigorous measure taken to maintain order, which would be entirely justified wherever our interests are at stake, would, if continued for any time longer than absolutely required, greatly hinder the task which, even more than England, we have set ourselves to accomplish—*namely to pacify the country and to re-establish a normal state of affairs at Teheran.*

[1] The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, the project of which forms first document of Book Three, divided Persia into a Russian and an English zone of influence and a neutral zone.

It is obvious that the presence of our troops in Teheran is bound to create an anti-European feeling, the development of which might unfavourably affect our diplomatic action. The whole appears to me to be a question of keeping a true measure. *A Russian military expedition in the north and a British in the south, confined both locally and in point of time, would certainly prove useful.* The conditions under which England has had to act at Bushir are obviously much easier, still the order to withdraw has been already given, as Sir Charles Hardinge[1] told me. To recapitulate: *My idea is that our troops ought to be left at Tabriz only for the length of time they are actually required on the spot, and, for the rest, to remain strictly true to the principle which we have followed up to the present, to intervene with an armed force only where this is absolutely necessary.*

I do not know whether the moment has already arrived, but it seems to me that a sudden and complete evacuation might have unfavourable consequences. *The best way to create a favourable impression in Persia, and to allay all suspicions as to our further intentions, would be, in my opinion, if a small part of our troops were withdrawn as soon as the necessary order had been re-established,* and only a part left behind until a local government had been formed; this detachment would then have the character of a mere guard to maintain law and order. The complete evacuation would then have to follow as soon as possible, and were it but to show that Russia and England are acting in full accord; a fact which I deem absolutely necessary in order to conduct the negotiations to a good end, *which pursue no other object than to re-establish order in Persia and to maintain Anglo-Russian co-operation.*

(54) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, May* 21-*June* 3, 1909. *No.* 77.

Hardinge is very much disturbed by the sharp measures taken by us at Tabriz; as for example, the destruction of dwellings. He is expecting questions in Parliament which might prove very awkward for the Government.

[1] British under-secretary for foreign affairs.

(55) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. May 23-June 5, 1909. No. 969.*

Nicolson, the British Ambassador,[1] has confidentially communicated to me the contents of two telegrams received from Grey. *The Minister draws attention to the concern caused in London by actions which our troops are said to have committed in Tabriz. He fears that the political understanding, so happily established between the two Governments, might suffer in consequence and that the British authorities might be obliged to proceed against the Shah if the Russian military authorities were to take sides against the Nationalists.*[2] *He deems it desirable to have the instructions given to the Russian general repeated. It might even be expedient to withdraw a part of the Russian troops from Tabriz. Grey is prompted by the wish to maintain the closest co-operation with Russia in all Persian questions. He knows well that this is likewise the desire of the Russian Government. He would sincerely regret if he were unable to reply to any questions that might possibly be put to him in the House to the effect that the Russian general had exceeded his instructions, and if he would have to admit that the two Governments are no longer acting in concert.* He trusts that the detailed reports which the two Legations[3] have called for from Tabriz will serve to clear up the situation.

I have not failed to give to the Ambassador explanations of a reassuring character. The Russian troops are taking no sides against the Nationalists. *An incident has taken place, it is true; but there is no need to exaggerate its importance. It is true that the Russian general has considered it as his duty to resort to vigorous measures to put down deeds of violence, of pillaging, and of provocation of our troops.*[4] A special Cabinet meeting will take place on Sunday night when this incident will be discussed, prompted by the desire to avoid a misunderstanding with England. *If necessary, the orders sent to General Snarski will be repeated.*[5] I myself am of the opinion, and I shall endeavour to have it accepted by the Cabinet, that the number of our troops might be reduced as soon

[1] At Petrograd.
[2] The intention was to keep this thoroughly corrupt monarch in power, although the people had risen against him. The partition of Persia into a Russian and a British sphere had been effected with the connivance of the Shah.
[3] The British and Russian Legations at Teheran.
[4] Further on it is shown that the Persians were a peaceful people.
[5] Commanding officer of the Cossacks who were involved.

as the new Persian Governor-General, recommended by Russia and England, has been appointed for Tabriz in the place of the present incapable Vice-Governor, and as soon as the former will have had the possibility of taking such measures as to guarantee the personal safety of the Russian subjects and of the other foreigners.

As regards the "Bast" of Sattar and Baghir at the Turkish Consulate, this has nothing to do with our troops. The voluntary departure of these two persons would contribute a great deal towards the re-establishment of order. I am pleased to hear that Grey is convinced that the *Russian Government is desirous of maintaining a good understanding with England in all Persian questions.*

(56) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Letter, May 25-June 7,* 1909.

The moment I entered today, Grey at once took up the Persian question. He told me that he had received telegrams from Nicolson reporting the substance of the interview with Your Excellency —I assume it is the same interview the contents of which you communicated to me by wire.

Sir Edward told me that he wished to have it clearly understood that if the prolonged presence of our troops in Tabriz disturbed him, this did not mean that the British Government feared any strengthening of our influence in North Persia. This natural influence had been taken for granted in the Convention; it had already previously existed, and England was far from offering any opposition thereto. He told me that he had been obliged to consider recent events mainly from a parliamentary point of view; i.e. that it was important for him to be able to make definite statements in reply to any definite questions that might be put to him in the House; *that he must be able to state that not only the methods of Russian diplomacy—with regard to which of course no doubt exists—but also the measures taken by our troops corresponded exactly to the program agreed upon by both Governments, and that consequently both Governments acted in complete unison.*

This was the case when the Russian troops entered Persian territory in order to prevent a massacre of Europeans.[1] But, he added,

[1] A mere pretext.

his position would be rendered very difficult if the Russian force would remain on the spot after order had been again established, and that, since such a contingency had not been provided for by our Convention, he could make no statement to the contrary and declare that the permanent Russian occupation was the result of an agreement.

I replied that the recent incidents did not appear to me to be sufficiently cleared up, and that I trusted the reports drawn up by the two Consuls at Tabriz would throw fresh light upon the matter.[1] *Sir Edward mentioned no details, and I thought it best to do likewise. However, I added, that it was with regret that the fact must be established that Turkish diplomacy had played a hand in this matter. This was not denied by Sir Edward; still he added that it would be far easier to demand of Turkey not to interfere in matters relating to Persia after our troops had been withdrawn.*

(57) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 17-30, 1909. *No.* 114.

Grey told me today that he entirely understood to what extent the general situation had been complicated by the threatening action of the Bakhtiari,[2] *and that it was not his intention to discuss the possibility of an armed intervention on the part of Russia at Teheran;* he merely wished to direct our attention to the fact that if our troops succeeded in re-establishing order at Teheran, the last remnant of prestige still enjoyed by the Persian Government was bound to vanish even after the introduction of reforms, *since all the disaffected elements in the country would maintain that the Shah was but a tool in the hands of foreigners.* The result would be that troubles would not cease, while in the provinces the independence of local districts might possibly be proclaimed which, of course, would be extraordinarily harmful to the interests of the two Powers.

I replied with two arguments:

1.) The position of the Shah would have to be considered in a different light now that he had accepted the advice of our Representatives, than at the time when he refused to follow our advice or did not fulfil his obligations;

[1] The excesses of the Russian troops.
[2] Persian insurgents opposed to Russian occupation.

2.) *That Russia, being a neighbouring state, was under special obligations.*

In response to the first argument, Grey replied that all faith in the Shah had already been shaken, *since it was known that he had decided upon reforms only in consequence of the pressure which we had brought to bear upon him,*[1] and that the presence of foreign troops would undermine the remainder of his prestige.

As regarded our peculiar position as a neighbouring state, he did not deny the importance of this argument; however, he trusted that the presence of our troops at Tabriz would suffice to maintain order north of Teheran, while at Teheran itself the brigade of Cossacks ought to be an adequate defence against the Bakhtiari. He repeated that he was only communicating his personal opinions. *However, I believe that the possibility of an occupation of Teheran is causing him much greater anxiety than he wished to admit to me.*[2]

(58) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, June 19-July 2, 1909. No.* 1149.

The British Chargé d'Affaires [3] has communicated to me the contents of a telegram from Grey *in which expression is given to the uneasiness created by the sending of Russian troops to Persia. He is of Barclay's* [4] *opinion that these troops might arouse an anti-Russian, and even an anti-European movement, and that the Persian brigade of cossacks commanded by Russian officers, is adequate to maintain order at Teheran. He also hints as to how dangerous it would be for us to assist the Shah with an armed force, as this would direct popular resentment against Russia and might induce the latter to send a still larger number of troops to Persia. This would necessarily oblige England to abandon the policy of maintaining an understanding with Russia in Persia. If, on the other hand, we allow events to take their course and confine ourselves to the protection of the life of the Shah whenever this may become necessary, Russia might at a later date take up a more favourable position in Persia. My reply*

[1] A contradiction.
[2] Since that might have led to what Grey wished to prevent—the annexation of Northern Persia by Russia.
[3] O'Beirne.
[4] British minister at Teheran.

to O'Beirne was that we have not the least intention of supporting the Shah by force of arms, nor that we were in any way inclined to interfere in the internal affairs of Persia.[1]

On the other hand, we had received disquieting news from Teheran, and feared that the attack contemplated by the Bakhtiari and the Kaswin revolutionaries upon Teheran would doubtless lead to serious disturbances, which the brigade of cossacks, at present extremely weakened, would prove entirely unequal to deal with and that, as a result, the safety of the foreign Legations, as well as the lives of the Russian and other foreign subjects, and all foreign enterprises, were exposed to a great peril. In view of these circumstances, we deemed it our duty to consider measures of protection. and that we would assume a grave responsibility if we fail to do so.

In conclusion I gave the Chargé d'Affaires the assurance that the sending of our troops in the direction of Resht-Kaswin was only taking place for the purpose of protecting our interests, *and not in order to lend aid to the Shah, whose fate most probably will have been decided before our troops reach their point of destination.*

(59) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, June 20-July 3, 1909. No. 125.*

Your telegram No. 1145 received.

The extract which Grey communicated to me does not contain the phrase: *"to abandon the policy of maintaining an understanding with Russia in Persia."*

The words quoted are:

. . . "in this case it will be impossible for us to maintain that the policy of non-intervention can be kept up, and the entire trend of the policy pursued with regard to Persia will have to be seriously changed."

The meaning of this sentence is not quite clear; I have carefully abstained from reverting to it in the course of yesterday's interview. However, the whole character of the conversation causes me to believe that the interpretation which the British Chargé d'Affaires gave to the phrase was somewhat premature.

[1] Which statement was at variance with the fact.

(60) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 30-*July* 13, 1909. *No.* 146.

No. 1. Grey has received two telegrams from the British Minister at Teheran. The first contains the information *that Teheran has been occupied by the Fidais*[1] *and that order in the town has been hardly disturbed, while expressing the apprehension that Sablin, our Chargé d'Affaires, is thinking of calling in Russian cavalry.* **Grey wired to O'Beirne, and showed me the telegram.** *He is extremely alarmed and says that the appearance of Russian troops in Teheran would in any case be looked upon as an armed intervention in favour of the Shah, while it is just the general mistrust of the Shah which has given rise to the present occurrences. The result would be that the Shah would be saved solely by our troops.*

Grey is of the opinion that this would mean the beginning of the general breakdown of the country with all its consequences. *He asked me whether it was true that we were about to land further troops in Persia. He fears that such a strong Russian army would inflame the feelings of the Moslims, which, as it is, are already greatly excited. I replied that, according to my view, Sablin was only calling in Russian cavalry for the purpose of protecting the Legations and the European institutions, and by no means for the purpose of protecting the Shah's Government.*

After I left, Grey received another telegram which he sent me, accompanied by a note, the substance of which I am wiring you sub 2. This telegram gives some details, expresses no fear for the safety of the foreigners, states that no plundering took place and that Sablin's fears were now allayed.

Grey says that he thinks that we have now reached the critical moment and that the future of the country, and the part we are going to play in it, will depend on it. *The situation seems to me to be sufficiently grave to induce me again to repeat the assurance that our troops will refrain from all intervention, and will merely confine themselves to protecting the Legations and the Europeans, and that the number of the troops ordered to Teheran will not exceed the number absolutely required. The fact is that we must clearly state the task of our troops and under what conditions they will be recalled. This is a point which, to my mind, must still be cleared up as*

[1] Persian revolutionary forces.

otherwise all faith—I do not wish to say, in our Government, but at least in the efficiency of our policy and its results—will be undermined.

Grey repeated that any reinforcement of the guards for the Legations and Consulates were entirely justified. *I, too, believe that we are approaching the critical stage and that any intervention which might be considered as taking place in favour of the Shah, would burden us with a grave responsibility.*

(61) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 30-*July* 13, 1909. *No.* 147.

No. 2. Enclosed the text of the accompanying note:

This telegram has been received from Barclay since last I saw you. He confirms what I said. I feel more than ever that the present moment is the critical hour for Persia. Moderation and patience are certainly required in order to give the rival parties in the country the possibility of determining for themselves the course matters are to take, and also in order to enable a re-establishment of normal conditions in Persia, in which case the Russian prestige in North Persia will not have been impaired, and this without any further responsibilities and sacrifices having been assumed, and without causing the collapse of Persia. For any interference in the internal quarrel of the political parties at this moment must bring about the collapse of Persia.

(62) *The British Ambassador at Constantinople to the British Foreign Office. Telegram, July* 1-14, 1909.

The British Consul-General at Bagdad wires me that he had today received the Mullah, Mohammed-Khorassani, the son-in-law of Seyid Abdullah, and Bebihany, as representatives of the Ulema. *They are prepared to promise that as soon as the Russian troops are recalled from Persia, they will be able to restore order in the country, and they implore that England should exert all her influence to effect this end. They maintain that the Russian troops are supporting the reactionary party*[1] *and are ill-treating the people, who now, owing to these measures, have been so excited they are no longer amenable to friendly counsels.* The public prayers at Kerbela and

[1] The party of the Shah who had surrendered the Persian people to the banks of Paris and the government of Russia in order to obtain the means he needed to continue his riotous living and prodigality.

Nejaf have been interrupted, and at all religious ceremonies an extraordinary excitement is making itself felt. Ulemas have talked about going to Persia in order to call upon the people to revolt; however up to now this has not been done. *As far as I can judge from here, the situation is becoming critical, and a solution will only be found after the Russian troops have been withdrawn.*

(63) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Letter, July 7-20, 1909.*

The telegrams of the "Times" on Saturday morning brought the news of the sudden and peaceful solution of the crisis at Teheran. Your Excellency's telegrams reached me yesterday afternoon, after Grey and Hardinge had already left town. I had to do the same, by the way, in order to spend the Sunday in the country, at Lord Clarendon's where I was to meet the King.[1]

My first impressions were naturally influenced by the words of the King. His Majesty said to me that things could not have developed more auspiciously, and that he hoped the Valiagd would be proclaimed Shah, *as we had agreed he should,* and that this would be also the most natural course. The King expressed the hope that the change of Government would take place as peaceably as possible.

I saw Grey yesterday. He told me that he was satisfied. So far everything was going well; *it had been impossible to establish anything of a lasting nature during the reign of the deposed Shah; he had forfeited everybody's confidence, and not without cause. Sir Edward told me that he appreciated the moderation and the forethought exercised by the Russian Government in the question of our troops;* he knew well what a powerful pressure had been exerted at Teheran on Sablin, and he spoke of him in a most appreciative manner.

"I repeat," he said, "that it is contrary to our own interests if Russia becomes unpopular in North Persia. But she would in any case have become so had her prestige merely reposed on the force of arms, which would have been very dangerous."

Sir Edward trusts that the Shah will soon have crossed the Russian frontier, *even if persuasion were to be employed to ob-*

[1] Edward VII of England.

tain this end; he thinks that the presence of the deposed Shah will merely serve to disturb everybody and call forth fresh intrigues which are always very dangerous at the beginning of a new reign. . . .

In conclusion Grey repeated that he noted to his great satisfaction that the solution of the crisis, provided the situation were not to alter, had shown to the whole world and particularly to certain political circles in London, that our co-operation in Persia had proven effective and that the Anglo-Russian Convention had emerged decidedly strengthened from this crisis. *The joint efforts made by both Governments, and the skill displayed by both our Representatives at Teheran, he added, have cut the ground from under those people's feet who again began to attack our Convention under the pretence that the Anglo-Russian Convention was not compatible with British interests; an exceedingly small, but very noisy, group.*

I replied that it were high time to destroy the legend of Russia harboring any idea of annexation, and to understand that all serious minds in Russia reject such plans.

(64) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Aug.* 3-16, 1909.

Your Excellency is already informed of the satisfactory results of the conversations which M. Iswolsky has had with the British Ministers during Their Majesties' visit to Cowes.

Apart from questions of a more general nature, a fundamental understanding concerning the Cretan question and the relations to Turkey has been easily established. In this present letter I shall merely confine myself to communicate some details with regard to Persian affairs.

With reference to this point there also reigned a complete agreement on principle. *However, it was a question of solving the rather difficult problem under what conditions our troops would be recalled.* In order to accelerate this measure, the London Cabinet brought forward arguments the importance of which could not be denied, however, it did not show the same determination as on former occasions. *Public opinion in England began to fear that, notwithstanding good intentions on the part of the Russian Government, the temporary presence of Russian troops might actually lead to the permanent occupation of*

Persia, which might have re-opened the question of strategic security of the Indian frontier and would have paralyzed the effect of the Convention.[1] The presence of our troops might have caused the outbreak of a spiritual movement far beyond the regions where our troops were stationed, a movement which would have spread throughout the Orient, and chiefly throughout Turkey, and which would have threatened both our own as well as British interests. *Besides, this would have produced acts of animosity against Russia in Persia itself, which in turn would have led to further suppressive measures on our part.*

Without denying the justification of these considerations, our Minister succeeded in bringing the logical proof that even if we were now able to withdraw our troops they would perhaps have to enter Persia a second time, and that a second withdrawal would prove much more difficult than the first. Grey has, by the way, admitted that any fears entertained on the part of England had been disarmed by the proof of disinterestedness which we had given by keeping our troops outside of the gates of Teheran during the change of government. This part of the conversation, at which Asquith,[2] Sir A. Nicolson, and I were present, was, so to speak, merely the prelude to the drawing up of the joint program to be followed by us in the future. Grey began by pointing out that Great Britain, naturally, laid weight upon preserving her prestige within her sphere of influence, but that she was far from wishing that the Russian influence in the North should be in any way impaired by present events; that it was in England's own interest that the Russian prestige which had always existed, even before the Convention had been concluded, be maintained, *and that, consequently, the Russian Government might count upon Great Britain's assistance in all questions in which Russian interests were at stake.*

Sir Edward cited three examples: *He admits that the foreign officers in Persian service can only be Russians; that the Russian governor of the young Shah must not be replaced by an Englishman, neither by Lindley, nor any one else; that England is prepared to assist us to balk Zilli's intentions to take possession of the throne. When*

[1] Which was to occupy Russia in Persia instead of Great Britain's Indian Empire.

[2] British prime minister.

Iswolsky pointed to the anomaly of a Caucasian revolutionary, who was a Russian subject, acting as chief of the Persian police, Grey fully agreed.

Various questions were dealt with, *inter alia,* that of the nationality of the financial advisers and of the customs officials. However, the solution of this intricate question was reserved to a later date after considerations of a more negative nature had shown that our views were in complete agreement.

As regards the administration of the customs, Grey thought it would be simplest if the mortgaged custom house offices in the North were placed under Russians, and those in the South under Englishmen. But he subsequently himself raised the objection that such a scheme would look too much like a partition of Persia.

(65) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Jan.* 8-21, 1910. *No.* 38.

The German Ambassador[1] informed me in the name of his Government that the German Legation at Teheran had learned *that Russia and England had resolved to admit only French subjects, besides Russian and British subjects, to the Persian service as advisers. Count Pourtalès has been instructed to declare that the German Government was fully prepared to acknowledge the privileged position of Russia and England in Persia, but that, on the other hand, it would have to insist that no privileged position were granted to the nationals of a third Power to the prejudice of German nationals.*[2]

I replied that I would make the necessary investigations and would then give him an exact reply. The fact is that I deem it proper before discussing the matter any further with Pourtalès to secure absolute unanimity with the London Cabinet, to which probably a similar question will have been addressed, and I request you to ask Grey what answer we ought to give to the German Government.

For our part, we consider it necessary to reply as follows:

[1] Count Pourtalès, at St. Petersburg.

[2] The objection of the German government was based on the fear that absolute control of the finances of Persia, revenues and expenditures alike, by France, Russia and Great Britain would lead to the exclusion from Persian markets of German merchandise, as was the intention—proven hereinafter.

"The German inquiry has probably been occasioned by the fact that the Persian Government is thinking of appointing some Frenchmen as assistants to Bizot.[1] This question was raised already in January last year, when the Persian Government, without the knowledge of Russia and England, addressed itself directly to the French Government with the request to invite some Frenchmen to come over to Persia to act as assistants to the above-mentioned financial adviser. Upon inquiry on the part of the French Government, Russia and England replied that they had no objection to this request on the part of the Persian Government, since it was but natural that Bizot should prefer his own countrymen.

"Probably the same measure is now being considered. It is not a question of the appointment of any other foreigners and there has never been any question of an agreement between Russia and England, such as Count Pourtalès appeared to have in mind, to permit only the appointment of Frenchmen as advisers.

"We are pleased to learn that the political precedence of Russia and England in Persia is acknowledged by the German Government, and we can only declare that when it comes to a question of appointing other than British or Russian nationals to official positions in Persia, we have no intention to grant any privileges whatsoever to the nationals of any third Power. Having regard for the fact that the appointment of advisers is a political question, since it relates to the administrative organisation of Persia, and as moreover Russia and England are the sole creditors of Persia and this to a considerable extent, both these Powers have the absolute right to demand that the Persian Government shall appoint foreign advisers only upon a previous understanding having been arrived at with Russia and England."

Kindly let me know Grey's reply.

(66) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Jan. 13-26, 1910. No. 6.*

Your telegram No. 38 received.

In reply to my communication, Grey handed me the following memorandum:

[1] The intention was to place the control of Persia's finances entirely in the hands of a French-managed sort of super-ministry.

"It is true that the request to nominate advisers was addressed directly by the Persian Government to the French Government in January 1909, and that both Powers (i.e. Russia and England) confined themselves to simply informing the French Government that they would raise no objections. *It would however be difficult to maintain as is stated in the Russian draft, that the question of the appointment of other foreigners had not been raised, for one of the terms of the* 10 *million-francs loan expressly provides that the Persian Government shall immediately request the French Government to appoint seven additional officials.*[1]

The German Government would doubtless hear of these appointments, as also of the pressure brought to bear upon Persia on this occasion by the two Governments, and Germany would, as a result, have cause to complain that the assurances given her had not been kept."

Grey therefore submits to Your Excellency the following draft for a reply:

"The Russian Government is gratified to learn that Germany acknowledges the privileged position of Russia and Great Britain in Persia.

"Russia assumes that the inquiry made by the German Government refers to the appointment of a French treasurer-general and an inspector of finances, which took place in 1909. The Russian Government desires to point out that these appointments on the part of the Persian Government were made upon the recommendation of Bizot, the financial adviser, and that they were merely confirmed by Russia and Great Britain. It is only natural that Bizot should give the preference to French collaborators, *but there does not exist any understanding between Russia and Great Britain with regard to any restriction in the appointment of foreign advisers whenever these happen to be neither Russians nor Englishmen. The right of the Persian Government to appoint whomsoever it pleases to offices in its own administration is of course undeniable, but Russia and England, being neighbours of Persia, and also being her credi-*

[1] The loan was being raised in France and constituted the share of France in the further economic exploitation of a people reduced to beggary by their extravagant government. The loan was secured by Persian revenues, and made France an interested party to Russo-British action in Persia.

tors, have special interests which give them the right to demand that appointments of the said character be first submitted to their approval."

Grey adds that he had not yet received any similar inquiry on the part of the German Government; should however such an inquiry be made he will reply in accordance with the above, provided it meets with your approval.

(67) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Jan.* 18-31, 1910. *No.* 98.

Your telegram No. 6 received.

No. 1. *Grey's draft makes no mention of the very important point of the political nature of the post of a foreign adviser. We attach much particular importance to this point, because the German Government expressly declared that the objects which it pursues in Persia are of a merely economic and not of a political nature.*[1] Besides, this draft does not lay sufficient stress on the difference existing between officials at the head of various departments—and this is obviously, what the Germans appear to understand by the term "adviser"—and the seven Frenchmen who are now to be appointed as Bizot's assistants. We have consequently made some alterations in the text proposed by Grey.

You will receive our counter-draft sub No. 2.

(68) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan.* 18-31, 1910. *No.* 99.

No. 2.

"The Russian Government is pleased to learn that Germany acknowledges the special[2] *position held by Russia and Great Britain in Persia.* It assumes that the German Government has in mind the intended appointment of seven Frenchmen to act as assistants to Bizot.

"With regard to this point it must be borne in mind, that in January 1909, the Persian Government, acting on Bizot's advice addressed itself directly to the French Government in order to request that two Frenchmen be appointed to act as assistants to the financial adviser, and that Russia and England, being communicated with by France, gave their consent, as it appeared but

[1] In this case the same thing under two different labels.
[2] Grey's "privileged" position was not strong enough for Iswolsky.

natural that Bizot should prefer to have his own countrymen to act as his collaborators. The question at present is to increase the number of the assistants to the financial adviser to seven.

"As regards the principle of appointing foreigners as advisers to the various administrative departments, it may be said that this point has not yet been raised. In any case, however, *no understanding has yet been arrived at between Russia and Great Britain in which the appointment of foreigners, other than Russian and English subjects, is in any way restricted.* The right of the Persian Government to select for itself the persons it intends to appoint, is undeniable; *however it must be considered that the question of these advisers is an entirely political one, since it relates directly to the administrative organisation of Persia, and that Russia and England, being neighbouring States and chief creditors of Persia, possess special rights which entitle them to demand that appointments of such a character be first submitted to them for their approval.*"

(69) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Letter, Jan. 20-Feb. 2,* 1910.

Grey being absent, I have sent him a memorandum containing the reply which, according to your telegram No. 98, you intend to give to Count Pourtalès. Sir Charles Hardinge was, by the way, rather disconcerted by the step taken by Germany, and he has subsequently told me that the reply drawn up by you appears to him personally to be very opportune.

When I saw Grey, he practically said the same thing; however he added that, *even though the statement made by Count Pourtalès were perfectly gratifying, inasmuch as it expressed the acknowledgement of the special interests which Russia and Great Britain possessed in Persia, the question on the other hand was being shifted on to a peculiarly delicate ground which made argumentation rather difficult.* He thinks rather rightly considered the words used by the German Ambassador mean: "We acknowledge the privileged position enjoyed by the Russians and British, but as soon as other nationals enter into question they must all be treated equally."

This principle, Sir Edward maintains, may be easily defended because it is not unjustified, and on the other hand, it is difficult to assail, though the negotiations relating to the loan and even to the

advance payment of 400,000£ *stlg. prove that we are unable to uphold this principle.*[1]

At the same time he handed me a counter-draft, remarking that it appeared to him safer not to pretend that the question of the appointment of new foreign officials had not already been raised.

(70) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Letter, Feb.* 25-*March* 10, 1910.

From the enclosed copy of a telegram received from our Minister at Teheran you will learn that the appointment of seven Frenchmen to offices in the Persian Ministry of Finance is troubling the German Minister at Teheran who looks upon this step on the part of the Persian Government *as incompatible with German interests. From another, very secret source, I learn that Count Quadt considers this appointment as a direct threat to the principle of the "open door," to the prejudice of Germany and of all other nations engaged in commerce with Persia, and that he, moreover, considers some other conditions, which we and England have put to the Persian Government in connection with the advance payment of* 10 *million francs, as a violation of Persia's independence and this without offering any compensations in favour of Germany.*

He has consequently advised the Berlin Cabinet to demand of us and of England that our conditions of controlling the Persian finances be cancelled, and that the contents of all our other conditions be communicated by us. I have to remark in this connection that since we have given Count Pourtalès the reply revised in accordance with my telegram No. 99, no further communication has been received from the Berlin Cabinet.

If such further communication should still come, I have the intention to repeat the reply already given and in addition to point out that even now other foreigners, besides Frenchmen, had been appointed to Persia, as for example Belgians, who have charge of the entire administration of the customs; and I shall categorically deny that we were at any time disposed to infringe the principle of the "open door" in Persia.

[1] The principle, though not "unjustified" and "difficult to assail" could not be upheld because of an advance payment of £400,000.

If, hereupon, the German Government should mention the other conditions in connection with the advance, I have no objection to inform the German Government confidentially of their nature; *but I shall lay stress on their political nature and maintain that they were never intended to be in any way prejudicial to the economic interests of the other Powers in Persia, which, in their turn, could not but acknowledge the peculiar position and the special privileges due to Russia and England in that country.*

It appears to me however necessary to arrive first of all at an understanding with England, and I, therefore, request you to make the contents of this letter the subject of a conversation with Sir Edward Grey.

(71) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March 2-15, 1910. No.* 51.

Your letter No. 171 received.

Its contents have already been discussed by wire, and I shall therefore confine myself to recapitulate Grey's views briefly:

He is of the opinion that the negotiations relating to the loan should be concluded with all speed in order to prevent any interference on the part of Germany.[1] *He believes that our arguments in favour of the appointment of Frenchmen lack a solid foundation, since the appointment neither of British nor of Russian subjects was contemplated.*

Grey accordingly believes that any such condition should be dropped. Bizot might choose his collaborators from among the nationals of other countries, which are not Great Powers. Grey fears very much that the arrival of Russian reinforcements in Persia will create an impression extremely unfavourable to the conclusion of the loan. He repeated that he saw no other solution but that we recall our Kaswin division, since Teheran is not at all threatened.

As to the question of communicating the terms of the loan to Germany, Grey would like to think it over till to-morrow. He says that, personally, he also did not mind if Germany came to know these terms, but he fears that Germany wants to be informed of these terms through the usual diplomatic channel in order to

[1] The intention was to place Germany before a *fait accompli.*

raise other points, such, for example, as the question of the railways. The manner in which the question has been put actually troubles Grey more than the matter itself. Grey informed me of a step made by the German Ambassador here. Details will follow by letter.

(72) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 3-16, 1910. *No.* 52.

Continuation of my telegram No. 51.

From the standpoint of principle, Grey has no objections to offer against the terms of the Persian loan being confidentially communicated to the Berlin Cabinet. In his opinion, however, such a communication contains a certain danger. Such an inquiry on the part of Germany seems to indicate that the Berlin Cabinet has the intention of raising objections to one or the other term of the loan, of which it has probably already been informed by the Persian Government, and that this step signifies only the beginning of further developments. He considers as very likely that the German Government will open the question of railway constructions in Persia, and Grey deems this question to be eminently important with regard to our Convention. Grey asked me to submit to you all these considerations.

(73) *The Same to the Same. Letter, March* 3-16, 1910.

Grey gave me the following details about his conversation with the German Ambassador, Count Metternich.

The language used by Metternich was of a far more hesitating nature, than that of Count Pourtalès seems to have been. Speaking in the name of his Government, Count Pourtalès primarily declared that Persia owed Germany 10,000 pounds sterling and that it would be no more than right if the advance payment were employed to settle this debt. In this connection, he referred to the fact that the British Government was making payments to Persia, and that in this way England was getting back the sums due her, whereas Germany disposed of no such means.

Grey replied that the Ambassador was mistaken. England was making no payments whatsoever to Persia, and the amount due

her,[1] and even the interest thereon, were in no way affected by the grant of an advance, since the latter was intended to serve exclusively to cover the most pressing needs of the Persian administration; this might be perhaps the case in the event of a bigger loan, but it was not the case at present.

Thereupon, Metternich mentioned the circumstance that the grant of an advance would lead to the appointment of foreigners, and that in such a contingency, Germany, by virtue of the principle of maintaining the "open door," could not permit German nationals to be over-looked.

Grey answered that in reality it was not a question of appointing new foreign officials, who were already employed in Persia, but that it was merely a question of providing some assistants for Bizot, who, of course would be French, like himself.

Metternich's answer was that it was just this very appointment of Frenchmen which the German Government had in mind since by such means the Persian finances were coming under exclusive French control.

This led Grey to say that in any case the principle of the "open door" did not appear to him to be in any way infringed.

Grey then communicated to me the personal considerations which formed the subject of my telegram of yesterday. *He thinks we should no longer insist on this particular condition. If it were a case of Russian or British subjects we would stand on safe ground. The political situation and British capital would justify our claiming this privilege. But things are different seeing that it is a question of Frenchmen, a selection which actually excludes the Germans, who are therefore not being treated in the same way as other nationals. Grey does not think that our arguments are plausible.*

In his opinion, the situation at Teheran may become critical, and it is therefore necessary to bring the negotiations with respect to the loan to as speedy a conclusion as possible. *What he considers to be the main obstacle is the presence of our troops at Kaswin. At least it appears to him doubtful whether the negotiations will lead to any result while our troops remain there without their presence being in any way warranted by the prospect of an outbreak*

[1] England.

of disturbances either at Kaswin or at Teheran.[1] I said in reply that it would prove difficult to raise this question while the negotiations were in progress. *Sir Edward admitted this; still he thought this might be done by a certain "dexterity" at Teheran: our joint interests were after all more important than everything else.*

(74) *The Same to the Same. Letter, March* 3-16, 1910.

In the course of yesterday's confidential conversation with Grey, I told him that you thought it probable that the German Government would express a desire of being informed of the stipulations which Russia and England had made in granting a loan. Sir Edward replied, somewhat hesitatingly, that he had on the whole no objections to offer, but that he would think the matter over, and he asked me to call upon him again to-day. He has just now declared to me that, on principle, he had no objection, *since he deemed it more than probable that Germany had already been informed of the terms by the Persians.*

But it is this very assumption which calls forth the following considerations.

If Germany already knows the terms, then it is now obviously prompted by the desire to raise objections against the one or the other of the conditions, and, to this end, it must be informed of them through the official channel. This is presumably the intention of Germany, and the condition against which Germany will protest is, as Grey believes, probably the question of the construction of railways in Persia.

"You will concede the huge importance of this point," said the Minister, "we have devoted so much care to the conclusion of our Conventions in order to safeguard our own interests and not those of Germany; German railway lines in Persia would render the value of our Convention questionable."

Sir Edward made no further comment, but the meaning of his words is perfectly clear. This was, moreover, confirmed by Hardinge whom I called upon after leaving Grey.

[1] Grey did not like the political aspect of the presence of Russian troops in Persia. The British parliament wanted to know what they were there for, since Persia was quiet.

Sir Charles said:

"I think it is very dangerous."

Before I left his room, *Sir Edward said that he must repeat that it was urgently necessary to bring the negotiations at Teheran to as quick a conclusion as possible. According to the information he had received our troops, which were advancing on Tabriz, had already returned to Julfa. But the perilous point is Kaswin upon which the success of our negotiations depends.*

(75) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, March 3-16, 1910. No. 339.*

I am wiring you the text of a Memorandum received from Germany, and I request you to ask Grey whether a similar step has been taken in London. We, for our part, consider the German communication rather an attempt to induce us to renew negotiations relative to the Bagdad Railway, than a serious attempt on the part of the German Government to intervene in the Persian question. Nevertheless, we shall have to give the Berlin Cabinet further explanations relative to the appointment of the seven Frenchmen.

We propose, in addition to the arguments enumerated in my letter No. 171, to point out that the stipulation made by us in connection with the loan was prompted more with a view to the number of the European assistants than to their particular nationality, and that Frenchmen appeared to be more suitable simply because they were Bizot's countrymen. *If we should subsequently be compelled to yield to Germany in this respect, the French would have to be replaced by Belgians, Swiss, or the subjects of some other neutral country.*

As regards the Bagdad Railway, it is our intention to answer the Berlin Cabinet that we are prepared to discuss this question together with England and France, but that we also did not reject the possibility of entering into direct negotiations with Germany.[1]

[1] Hitherto, Iswolsky had insisted that all questions concerning the Bagdad railroad could only be discussed by the "Four" Powers together, to wit: Russia, France, Great Britain, and Germany. To have his way in Persia, he was willing to use a little bait, which presently he withdrew again.

(76) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 3-16, 1910. *No.* 340.

The following is the text of the Memorandum submitted to me by Pourtalès:

"The reserve which Germany has of late observed in Persia must not be understood as though the German Government had ceased to regard Persia as an independent country, where Germany has the right to look to her own interests without previously asking the permission of other Powers. The Russian Government had at the time made Germany the proposal to conclude an agreement with her on the Persian question and the Bagdad Railway. Germany was prepared to enter upon an exchange of views. *However, since the end of* 1907 *the Russian Government has taken no further steps in this matter.* On the contrary, it has on several occasions acted in a manner that showed that it did not pay sufficient heed to German interests.

The appointment of seven Frenchmen to act as Bizot's assistants appears to be one of the chief conditions for the granting of the loan.[1] If this condition were complied with, Germany would thereby be excluded from one of the most important departments of the internal administration of Persia, while France would be admitted thereto; a fact which would certainly cause surprise in Germany. The Persian Government for its part would certainly be willing to appoint various German officials.

As concerns the Bagdad Railway, the Russian Government still seems to maintain the view that the negotiations must be carried on between all four Powers, *a proposition which Germany has declared herself unable to accept on principle. This attitude on the part of Russia does not appear to show the friendly disposition which Germany was led to expect, having herself displayed such a disinterested reserve in Persia. The German Government feels bound to state that this reserve cannot go to the extent of rendering it impossible for German commercial and financial circles to find a field of activity in Persia.* It is for this reason that the German Government has consented to a representative of the Deutsche Bank,

[1] As it was, because the French government and banks insisted upon that, and not without good reason, since the financial administration of Persia could not be left in the hands of Russian officials—notoriously corrupt and dishonest.

Said Ruete, going to Persia, who will at an early date proceed from Persia to Bagdad by way of Khanekin.

(77) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 5-18, 1910. *No.* 54.

Your telegram No. 339 received. No. 1.

Have made a corresponding communication to Grey yesterday. There is a great difference between Pourtalès' and Metternich's declarations. Sub. No. 2, I am forwarding the text of a Memorandum containing the reply whch Grey intends to make. In response to a question from me, *Grey stated that he did not believe that it was Germany's intention to resume the Bagdad Railway negotiations with us. He thinks the whole affair resembles Morocco.*[1]

However, he relies on the self-possession and moderation of Bethmann-Hollweg. Still he fears German plans with regard to railways in Persia, and he repeated that it was his opinion that in this question Russia and England must remain particularly firm.

Grey informed me that the Bagdad negotiations, which had been carried on between English and German financiers, had led to no results. With regard to this question, the Memorandum contains the following sentence:

"Grey has nothing to remark except that the reply proposed by you coincides with the attitude the London Cabinet intended to assume towards Russia and France while the negotiations between Cassel and Gwinner were taking place."

This means that England meant to reserve to herself the right to negotiate with Germany, but to conclude nothing without informing France and Russia.[2]

(78) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 5-18, 1910. *No.* 55.

No. 2. Contents of the Memorandum mentioned in No. 1:

Grey deems it expedient to refer to the first reply, still he thinks that the statement, that we had rather the number of the

[1] Showing Sir Edward's bias, because no step permitting that inference had been taken by Germany, who had admitted the "privileged" position in Persia of Great Britain and Russia.

[2] For full exposition of this case see diplomatic correspondence on Bagdad railroad and branches.

employees than their nationality in view, might give Germany the opportunity of demanding the appointment of German officials. Grey thinks that regret might be expressed that the explanations previously given had not proved sufficient and then it might be added that in 1909 the Persian Government had addressed itself directly to France.

It might further be added that it seems only natural that Bizot should give preference to Frenchmen, but that neither England nor France considered the appointment of assistants as absolutely necessary.

As regards the fact, to which the German Government had referred, that German interests were being infringed, and that Russia tried to exclude German financial and commercial interests from Persia, and finally, as concerns the railway, Grey is of opinion that it will be best to wait till the Persian finances have been put in order, upon which the maintenance of the political and economic independence of Persia, as also of the principle of the "open door" will depend and from which, consequently, German as well as all other foreign trade would only benefit.

On the other hand, in view of the fact that Germany recognized the privileged position enjoyed by the two neighbouring Powers, the conclusion might be drawn that these Powers have suffered more in consequence of the disorders than the others, and that for this reason they must assist Persia in reforming her finances, since this is the basis of all other reforms.[1] Grey attaches weight to the fact that Belgians are employed in the customs administration; this might perhaps induce Germany to withdraw her objections, and the appointment of subjects of a neutral state might then perhaps prove a good solution of the difficulty.

Grey would like to have your reply as early as possible in order to draw up a corresponding reply to Metternich.

(79) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 5-18, 1910. *No.* 56.

No. 3. Hardinge told me confidentially yesterday that it might be expedient to convey to the Persian Government the information that some compliance would be shown in the matter of the appoint-

[1] Meaning that if expedient this was to be so construed.

ment of Frenchmen, *if a request to this effect be made by the Persian Government.*

(80) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 7-20, 1910. *No.* 57.

In view of the fact that Bizot suggests in his reform proposals that the office of a special Financial Adviser be abolished, as soon as the three counselors and the four French assistants will have been appointed, Grey thinks that his words "it is but natural that Bizot should give Frenchmen the preference," ought to be amended as follows: "Bizot being the author of the project of the financial reform, it is but natural that he should desire to entrust the execution of this reform to Frenchmen."

(81) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 8-21, 1910. *No.* 62.

After Grey had concluded his statement to Metternich, the Ambassador told him that the Berlin Cabinet saw itself obliged to raise objections to the following conditions which, according to German information, had been put in the course of the negotiations relating to the loan:

(1) That within the Russian zone no concessions should be granted to foreigners, but only to Russians, and that the same stipulation had been made with regard to the British sphere of influence.

Grey intends to reply to-morrow that no such condition has been put.

(2) The stipulation in connection with Lake Urmiah.

Grey will reply that, this being a matter which concerns Russian interests, he could return no reply.

(3) The stipulation concerning the construction of railways within the two spheres of influence.

Grey will uphold the principle of the political interests of neighbouring States and will refer to the impossibility of granting concessions to foreign companies which might prove dangerous to either Russia or England from a strategical point of view.

(4) The stipulation which provides that no concessions shall be granted to Persians unless they prove that the capital involved is not derived from any foreign source.

Grey intends to reply that a stipulation in this form has not been proposed, but that of course Russia and England were obliged to devise measures to prevent the grant of concessions to Persians which might embody the same drawbacks as the grant of railway concessions.[1]

In the course of an interview with Hardinge, *I noticed that this new step of the Berlin Cabinet has caused much displeasure here.*

(82) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 8-21, 1910. *No.* 63.

Continuation of my telegram No. 62.

Grey informs me this evening by letter that Metternich had given him to understand that *the German Government was of the opinion that the terms of the Persian loan were of a nature to exclude foreign trade and to render Persia's independence illusory;* the Ambassador had however not stated the terms properly.

Grey intends to answer to-morrow; and he informed me of his intention to communicate the actual terms to Metternich. As I know your point of view, I am raising no objection. Grey intends to tell Metternich that the object of the conditions imposed by us was not necessarily to exclude foreign capital from railway construction in Persia, but that Russia and England must insist on this condition in order to prevent the possibility of the construction of a railway line which would threaten their frontiers[2] and which stood under foreign control.

Grey considers the communication of the actual terms as necessary *in order to be able to reply to the objections concerning the grant of concessions to Persian subjects, and of the privileges enjoyed by Russia and England within their respective spheres of influence.*

(83) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London. Telegram, March* 9-22, 1910. *No.* 372.

The German Ambassador has told me that according to informations received by the German Government,[3] Russia and England

[1] Meaning that even Persians themselves could not get concessions in their own country, in spite of which Great Britain and Russia insisted upon parading the fiction of Persian sovereignty.

[2] A mere pretext advanced by Great Britain and Russia to get Persia's economic system into their absolute control.

[3] From the Persians.

have made the following stipulations in the course of the negotiations relating to the loan:

No railways were to be allowed to be constructed without their consent.

The grant to Russia of a monopoly relating to navigation on Lake Urmiah.

The grant of a monopoly in connection with all commercial and industrial concessions in favour of Russia and England, to the exclusion of foreign enterprises.

Should this information prove correct, the German Government would have to regard them as incompatible with the principle of the economic equality of all nations, a principle recognized by the Anglo-Russian Convention, and the infringement of which would be tantamount to the violation of Persia's independence.

I replied to the Ambassador that these informations were not based on actual facts. The conditions put by Russia and England fully maintain the principle of the economic equality of all Powers, and the two States have never entertained the idea of excluding anybody from all commercial and industrial enterprises.

As to railways and other enterprises, embodying a political feature and liable to possess a strategic importance for Russia, we have always declared that we could never consent to such concessions being granted to foreigners. *In this spirit we began negotiations with Germany in* 1907, *which were then temporarily interrupted, and which we are now ready to resume.*

Pourtalès appeared to be satisfied with these explanations, and once again confirmed that Germany recognized the privileged position held by Russia and England in Persia, and that she merely desired to safeguard the liberty of German commercial enterprises, that, moreover, she did not contemplate constructing any railway lines in Persia.[1]

I request you to seize the first opportunity to inform Grey verbally of the above and to communicate to me his impression.

(84) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, March* 10-23, 1910. *No.* 380.

The reply which we have given to Germany corresponds in its main lines to that given by England. Nicolson writes me today

[1] Germany followed throughout Southwest Asia a policy known as "peaceful penetration," of which trading was the principal desideratum

that the London Cabinet had no objections to offer if we inform Pourtalès that in all matters concerning the Anglo-Russian Convention we deemed it necessary first to communicate with the British Government; Nicolson added that in this we could rely on the absolute support of the London Cabinet. We shall avail ourselves of this suggestion, if the Berlin Cabinet should approach us again.

(85) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 11-24, 1910. *No.* 383.

We have learned from a particularly secret source that the Persian Parliament has asked Quadt[1] *whether Germany, on the ground of the treaty concluded between Persia and Germany, would make representations to Russia in connection with the loan and as to the withdrawal of Persian troops from Persia. We have given the Persians to understand that any interference on the part of a third Power in our relations with Persia would only tend to render the situation worse and might induce us not to recall our troops.*

(86) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 11-24, 1910. *No.* 65.

Your telegram No. 383 received.

Similar advices have been received here. Hardinge is of the opinion that Germany will be unable to invoke the German-Persian Treaty of 1873 *since this provides for an intervention only in the case of the probability of an armed conflict with another Power.*

(87) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, March* 13-26, 1910. No. 406.

Our protest against the conclusion of a Persian loan outside of Russia and England having met with an unfavourable reply from Persia, *the British Government suggests that a statement be drawn up of all outstanding debts and to declare to Persia that we do not only intend to insist on the settlement of these claims but also of all other advances made should Persia persist in her intention to mortgage the revenues of the country as security for a loan to be granted by a third Power.*[2]

[1] German minister at Teheran.

[2] The Persian government was considering such a loan in Germany, and made later the attempt to raise a loan independently in Paris.

In our opinion we must try to avoid making any such declaration as we might be accused of wishing to prevent Persia from obtaining credit in other countries, and we have proposed to the British Ambassador to declare to the Persian Government the following:

Russia and Great Britain are prepared to acknowledge Persia's right to conclude loans in other countries, however, only under the following conditions:

First, the customs and other revenues, which constitute the security for the Russian and British loans must not be mortgaged;

Secondly, all previous financial obligations toward Russia and England must, together with the arrears of interest, be exactly determined and the source of revenue indicated which is to serve for the settlement of our outstanding claims;

Thirdly, no concessions can be granted to other foreigners within the Russian and British spheres of influence possessing a political or strategic significance, such as ways of communication, telegraphs, navigation on Lake Urmiah, and the like.[1]

(88) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 10-23, 1910.

Should we relinquish our demand as to the appointment of Frenchmen to the Persian Department of Finance, this would render the collaboration of the financial adviser with the rest of the experts, belonging to other nationalities, extremely difficult. The Imperial Russian Government alone is in a position to judge whether Germany, having now attained her aim, will not make use of other pretexts in order to exert pressure on the co-operation of England and Russia in Persia. If such a possibility exists, it would perhaps be better if we were now to insist on the appointment of the Frenchmen. *In any case, it would appear to me that an eventual relinquishment of our demand must be represented as a concession to Persia and not to Germany.* At the same time, we should have to establish the principle that either only Russian or British subjects, or else the subjects of minor Powers, may be appointed as Foreign Advisers or to other offices.

[1] So that no loans with concessions as security could be made, since anything may be given "political or strategic significance."

(89) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, April 3-16, 1910. No. 492.*

I am wiring to our Minister at Teheran as follows:

No. 1. Sub No. 2, I am sending you an extract from a Memorandum submitted by the British Ambassador in connection with the German claims in Persia. We, too, have received the proposal made by the Berlin Cabinet to resume the negotiations of 1907, and the German Ambassador has given us to understand that besides the English and the Russian zone of influence in Persia, there also exists a neutral zone, open to all the other Powers.

The conditions put forward by Germany appear to us in some respect as unacceptable *and for this reason we must reckon with the possibility that we shall have to exert a strong pressure on Persia in order to prevent that any concessions, which seem to us objectionable be granted to foreigners.*[1] *After we have secured this aim, we shall be able to come to an understanding with the Berlin Cabinet; such an understanding seems to us of course to be desirable. If the final confirmation of concessions rests with the Regent, he might be told that any grant of concessions to foreigners, without Russia and Great Britain having been previously consulted, will be regarded by us as an act of hostility, and will have the most serious consequences for Persia. At the same time, we are instructing Benckendorff to induce the London Cabinet to act in concert with us in this matter. As regards the coercive measures which, in case of necessity, we should have to employ against Persia, these will form the subject of a special conference to be held in the course of the next few days, and it will then be necessary to come to an agreement with London on this subject.*

Please wire urgently which measures you suggest.[2]

(90) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 3-16, 1910. *No.* 493.

I telegraph to Teheran sub No. 2:

The German Chancellor made to the British Ambassador at Berlin the following statement regarding the German claims in Persia:

[1] A naive distinction; presumably the Russians and British in Persia were no longer foreigners by virtue of the preposterous conduct of their governments.

[2] Benckendorff's advice would have been based on Great Britain's attitude, of course, for otherwise the Russian minister at Teheran, Poklewski-Koziel, would have been a more competent authority, since the Cossacks stood under his command.

The whole question ought to form part of a general political convention to be concluded between Germany and Great Britain. *Russia and England are to acknowledge the principle of the "open door." In return for Germany's waiving any claims to railway, telegraph, and similar concessions within the British sphere of influence, England shall grant Germany a proportionate share in the supply of materials and the like.*[1] *In case of Persian loans, Germany expects to receive the same share as third Powers: the same refers to the appointment of foreigners. Germany renounces all similar concessions in the Russian sphere of influence; on the other hand, Russia shall grant Germany equality of rights in all commercial questions and shall undertake to connect her railways in Northern Persia with the Bagdad Railway line, not to interfere with international traffic on this line and to facilitate the connection of the German line with Teheran.*

Bethmann-Hollweg pointed to the obstacles raised to foreign commerce by the prohibition of transit traffic through the Caucasus, and added that, after the Russian railway lines had been constructed in Northern Persia, and as long as Russia should maintain her refusal to allow the construction of a railway line between Teheran and Khanekin, Russia would secure for herself a monopoly of trade in Northern Persia, which would hardly be in the interests of British trade.[2]

(91) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 3-16, 1910. *No.* 494.

I refer to my telegrams Nos. 1 and 2 sent to Teheran.

It is obvious from Bethmann-Hollweg's communication that Germany is resolved to claim a position in Persia which would run counter to Russian and British interests in that country. *The hope of being able to arrive at an understanding with Germany by making concessions in the matter of the Bagdad question, can evidently not be realised.*[3]

In these circumstances there seems only one solution possible, namely to bring strong pressure on Persia in order to prevent her from

[1] Used in their construction.

[2] This document is given here for the sake of continuity, though more properly it belongs to the Bagdad railroad series. It will be well to bear its contents in mind.

[3] Owing to the principles involved, abandonment of which would have led to the final partition of Persia.

granting concessions to the Germans which would be incompatible with our interests. Russia and England must therefore not hesitate to employ extreme measures, and we suggest that an exchange of views as to the nature of these measures be begun. For the present the Representatives of the two Governments might make to the Persian Regent the statement mentioned in my telegram to Teheran.

This does not, of course, exclude the possibility of arriving at an acceptable understanding with Berlin, which will be all the easier the less chance the Berlin Cabinet will have to conclude a direct agreement with the Persian Government.

We are considering at the moment how we are to reply to the German proposals and we shall not fail to communicate first with the London Cabinet.

(92) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 10-23, 1910. *No.* 531.

Our Minister at Teheran telegraphed on April 6-19 as follows: No. 175.

I am of opinion that before taking any further steps, we should await the outcome of the Ministerial crisis.[1] Should a Cabinet be formed of radical elements, in whom Russia and England could have no confidence, and which is likely to conduct negotiations incompatible with the demands embodied in our last joint Note, *we should have to declare to the Persian Government that Russia and England will stop at nothing in order to force the Persians to make their policy agree with the demands of the said Note.*

It will be more advantageous for us to keep to this joint Note, since it completely protects our interests and makes no mention of Germany. *If we take such a step, we must be prepared, if necessary, to draw the final consequences, as the very slightest sign of yielding on our part would shake our prestige in Persia for a long time to come.*

The following are the coercive measures that might be employed against Persia:

(1) The refusal on the part of the two Legations to have any intercourse with the Cabinet which does not inspire us with confidence.[2]

[1] The Persian.

[2] One of the complaints of the Persians was that the Russian and British ministers at Teheran usurped the authority of the Persian government.

(2) A declaration that our troops would not be withdrawn from Persia, but that on the contrary they would be increased to their normal effective strength.

(3) The demand of immediate payment of the Persian debts, followed by the occupation of the Custom Houses.

(4) The threat that troops will occupy Teheran.

The latter measure would not be desirable and might lead to disturbances, but I believe the threat alone will be sufficient and that it need not be carried into effect.

(93) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Letter, April* 13-26, 1910.

Sir Edward Grey being absent, I sent Hardinge yesterday a translation of your telegram No. 531. The Under-Secretary of State told me that he would immediately communicate it to the Minister. He mentioned that he shared Poklewski's opinion completely that, above all things, *we should await the outcome of the Persian Ministerial crisis, and that we should not be in haste to take steps which, if the present Ministry were able to remain in power, might undermine the authority of the Ministers favourable to us and result in a fresh crisis.*

No additional advices have been received here on this subject.

As concerns the matter itself and the measures contemplated, Sir Charles expressed no opinion and will leave this to Grey. However, he seemed to me to be more optimistic than last time I saw him and appears to consider a discussion of such measures as premature. I know, however, that should need arise, he will approve of energetic measures being taken; the last time, however, he expressed his personal opinion that it should be stated at Teheran *that any action on the part of the Persian Government injurious to the interests of the two Powers would be considered by the latter as an act of hostility and would have the worst consequences for Persia, without, however, adding any definite threats.* He was confident that this would prove sufficient without obliging us to commit ourselves from the very outset by an announcement of coercive measures.

I think myself that we ought to consider the matter very carefully, in particular as concerns the extreme measure to be resorted to, namely that of a possible occupation of Teheran.

I have not the least doubt that this last-mentioned measure would completely change the character of the military measures resorted to so far.

The occupation of Tabriz and Kaswin was merely an intervention, not an interference, and had the nature of assistance given to the Persian Government to maintain order.

To occupy Teheran, and to force the Persian Government to grant us what it refuses to concede through diplomatic channels, *is nothing less than an act of war which would result in a change of the Ministry and in the formation of a Government which we should have to force upon the country; such a Government would, in the present circumstances, be able to maintain itself in power only as long as the occupation lasted.* This new Government, moreover, would have to accept terms which would be the result of a direct interference and which would have been embodied in a diplomatic document bearing the character of an enforced Treaty. This, to my mind, is the most important consideration. *Such a fact would be bound to produce a decided protest on the part of third Powers. We are warned that this third Power will be Germany, which will take up the theory of the "Open Door" as though nothing had happened.*

The conflict would thus change its character and from a Russo-Persian question, become a general European one.

(94) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Iswolsky. Telegram, April* 1-14, 1910.

I have today received a complaint from Schünemann. The Board controlling the high-road Julfa-Tabriz refuses to allow a locomobile bought by him to pass through, pretending it was too heavy. Schünemann points to the fact that engines bought by the Board and by a Persian subject are much heavier. *I do not consider it desirable to raise so openly artificial obstacles to German imports into Persia.*[1]

[1] A case of discrimination. Non-Entente commerce was being hampered throughout Persia in this manner.

(95) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, April 29-May 12, 1910. No. 631.*

Nicolson communicates to me the draft of the Joint Note to be addressed by us to the Persian Government. The draft has been drawn up by the British Chargé d'Affaires at Teheran. The British Ambassador informs me that Grey does not agree to its last part and suggests the following alteration:

"In view of the difficulty of enumerating the particular concessions which might be opposed to their political or strategic interests, the two Governments expect that the Persian Government will communicate with Russia and England before granting to any foreigner concessions of any kind whatsoever relating to railways, roads, telegraphs, or the construction of harbours in order to determine how the political and strategic interests of these two Powers may be adequately protected."

I share Grey's views as regards the last part of the Teheran draft. So far, however, as the first part is concerned, *I would consider it more prudent to leave out the words proposed by Grey, namely "railways, roads, telegraphs or harbour constructions" for there might be also other concessions damaging to us.*[1] But we might add to the contemplated declaration the following:

"Should the Persian Government not comply with the request of the two Powers, the latter will resort to such measures as they may deem necessary for the protection of their interests."

(96) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Iswolsky. Telegram, April 12-25, 1910.*

The French Minister is informed by his Government that a certain Cohen has arrived at Paris coming from Teheran, *who has secured from one of the Persian Ministers the option for the conclusion of a loan of 200 million francs, with the customs and telegraph revenues as security. The object of the loan is to enable Persia to pay her debt to the Governments of Russia and Great Britain and to the two Teheran banks.*

There are four large French banks interested in this financial operation; among others, the *Credit Lyonnais* and the *Banque de Paris*. On May 7 a special Persian Commission is coming to

[1] A sort of blanket warrant was desired.

Paris for the negotiations; the option to run four months from the date of the arrival of the said Commission at Paris. *Cohen had come to Teheran together with the jeweler who was to value the Persian crown jewels;* Cohen introduced himself as his companion[1] and told the French Minister here nothing of the real object of his visit. In reply to my French colleague's question as to how the Russian Government would regard such a project, *I answered that the payment of the sums due us was by no means compatible with our interests, since this would open the door for the political influence of foreigners in this country.*[2] For the same reason, we could also not allow foreign control of any Persian revenues within our sphere of influence.

(97) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Telegram, April* 15-28, 1910. No. 25.

On his return from Teheran, Cohen has given nobody any detailed information, but has merely requested the support of the French Government. *This has been refused, and he has been told that only such financial operations would be allowed to be carried through here which had first been submitted to the consideration of Great Britain and Russia. All others would be refused quotation on the Exchange.*[3] Besides, hardly any of the leading banks are participating in this international syndicate.

The Foreign Minister gave me the assurance that in all Persian affairs France would permit of nothing being undertaken which could be disagreeable to Russia and England. The financial circles have been duly informed of this.

(98) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, April* 30-*May* 13, 1910. *No.* 102.

Your telegram No. 631 received. Personal.

Hardinge's first impression is that the wording proposed by you, which does not mention what particular concessions are being

[1] The jeweler's.

[2] Since this would have given the Persians the right to insist that Russian military occupation be ended, and that Persia be once more regarded as a truly sovereign state, which was the aim of the Young Persians.

[3] Control of French finances in regard to foreign investments was a very effective means of the French government in the manipulation of international relations.

referred to, is a very radical measure and will hardly be accepted by the Persian Government. *He thinks moreover that the final threat is very strong.* I believe a more moderate wording will be proposed to you. This is not yet an official English reply.

(99) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 5-18, 1910. *No.* 104.

Nicolson will inform you of what Grey told Metternich.[1] He told him that since the Persian Government had asked for explanations in connection with the last Note, such explanations must now be given. *Speaking to the Ambassador, Grey did not disguise the fact that if the Persian Government brings Russia and England face to face with the "fait accompli" of a railway concession possessing a strategic political character having been granted, both Powers would be obliged to resort to strong measures against Persia.*

Grey stated that he had not the least intention of interfering with any German concessions *which were not of a political or strategic nature.*[2] For this reason, a German protest could only be raised if a justifiable application for the grant of a concession to Germans had been refused by Persia. Grey added that an Anglo-German agreement with respect to Persia could only be concluded in connection with the Bagdad Railway.

(100) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 8-21, 1910. *No.* 109.

With regard to your conversation with Pourtalès,[3] Grey tells me that your words and his agree, with the sole exception that you emphasized that we would not demand a reply from the Persian Government, which he did not mention. As regards our future negotiations with Germany, Grey asked whether apart from Persia they would also refer to the Bagdad Railway.

I replied that I did not know, *since the main object pursued by us during the former negotiations was to secure our position in Persia.* Grey remarked that it would be difficult to exclude the Bagdad

[1] German ambassador at London.
[2] The difficulty was that it was hard to convince the British and Russians that anything had not a "political and strategic nature."
[3] German ambassador at St. Petersburg.

question, since the branch-line from Khanekin must also be considered.

I asked him of what *modus procedendi* he thought; he replied that Germany was adverse to negotiations between four Powers at once and that *he therefore believed that the three interested Powers should negotiate separately, but should keep each other mutually informed as to the course the negotiations were taking; in any case the conclusion of the negotiations would have to take place between the four Powers.*[1]

(101) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, May 9-22, 1910. No. 695.*

Before giving Poklewski instructions, *I should like to know what Grey thinks of the recent statement made by Schön*[2] *to our Berlin Ambassador, which contains the formal assurance that Germany had never attempted to secure concessions in Persia which might prove objectionable to Russia and England, and that, moreover, she had also no intention of doing so in the future.* On the other hand, Schön insists that the joint Anglo-Russian step at Teheran be postponed in order to arrive at a friendly solution.

Please ask Grey, whether he thinks that the last proposition need not be considered, though this would give the Berlin Cabinet an obvious occasion to show itself unyielding in the course of the subsequent negotiations, or whether Schön's suggestion should be followed. In the first case, it would have to be remembered what an impression such a postponement would produce at Teheran. It seems to me that in the given circumstances our Representatives at Teheran might confine themselves to informing the Persian Government that they do not expect a reply to their Note for the present; *but if the Persian Government were to put Russia and England face to face with a "fait accompli" incompatible with their political and strategic interests, this would be regarded as an unfriendly act on the part of Persia and might induce the two Powers to resort to the measures required to protect their interests.*[3]

[1] As Benckendorff says further on: Germany always had to deal with groups —the Entente—in her endeavors beyond her own frontiers.
[2] German secretary of state for foreign affairs.
[3] Brute force.

(102) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, May 11-24, 1910. No. 113.*

Strictly confidential.

Paul Cambon has informed me of a conversation which had taken place last week between Pichon, Grey and himself. Among other things, Grey reported his conversation with Metternich. This report fully coincides with what we know about it from the English communications. However, there is a passage which Grey did not mention to us, and Cambon has asked me to make no use of it for the present; I therefore earnestly request you to pay due regard to this request of my French colleague.

Metternich proposed to the London Cabinet a political agreement in connection with Persia, and added that if the same were to be concluded there would be an end to the difficulties in the Bagdad Railway question. Grey replied that England had concluded a political Entente with Russia with regard to Persia, and that consequently it could not conclude another agreement with any other Power; *in this case, England was bound to Russia just as to France in the Morocco question.*[1]

I can only consider Grey's reserve toward us as due to an excessive feeling of discretion. This would explain his words that the London Cabinet cannot regard the German proposal as constituting a basis for negotiations, a sentence which at the time did not seem quite clear to you. This would also explain Sir Edward Grey's words as to the impossibility of separating the negotiations relative to Persia from those connected with the Bagdad Railway. *And finally it explains Grey's opinion that negotiations with Germany in connection with Persia would have to be conducted by Russia and England in common.*[2]

(103) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, May 13-26, 1910. No. 717.*

I am telegraphing to our Ambassador at Berlin as follows:

The British Chargé d'Affaires has communicated to me the contents of a telegram received from Berlin to the effect that Schön has stated

[1] And yet Grey had pleaded a great "disinterestedness" in Moroccan matters that led to war almost on two occasions.

[2] So that Grey might force through his claims on the Bagdad-Basra-Koweit sector.

to the British Chargé d'Affaires that the German Representative in London had received instructions not to refer any more to the Persian question, as, owing to the explanation which the German Government had received, this question had lost its acute character. I for my part can confirm that since my last conversation with Count Pourtalès, he has not reverted to the Persian question again and has in fact shown himself more yielding.[1]

(104) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Iswolsky. Letter, May* 18-31, 1910.

Hardinge has read to me the report of the British Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin concerning his recent conversation with Schön.

The German Minister first said that he had instructed Count Metternich not to refer again for the present to the Persian question, and he explained this by saying that there had been a misunderstanding between Germany, Russia and England in connection with this matter. He thereupon gave an account of the course of the latest negotiations. He said that at first they had believed at St. Petersburg that Germany had the intention of negotiating with Persia in order to secure various special advantages, as also for the purpose of concluding a loan. This misunderstanding was soon cleared up. Thereupon, Germany had received information of a nature to create the impression that Russia and England, by exerting pressure on Persia, laid claim to privileges which would have been found hardly compatible with the rights enjoyed by Germany. The frank explanations given by both sides had, however, also removed this difficulty.

There remained only the one consideration that Germany had expressed: the desire that England and Russia should not resort to measures with regard to Persia which might be liable to disturb public opinion in Germany. *Schön added that in certain circles he had been accused of having wished to create difficulties in Persia similar to those that had subsequently led to the Conference of Algeciras. Nothing had been further from his mind. . . .*

[1] The German government retreated in the interest of its plans of railroad construction and commercial development in Turkey-in-Asia.

The British Chargé d'Affaires looks upon this conversation as indicative of a distinct change of attitude on the part of the Berlin Cabinet. *He thinks that one of the reasons for this must be sought in the visit which Emperor William paid to London, and that the impressions which he had there received had had a decided influence on the attitude of the Berlin Cabinet.* He also believes that the lack of support on the part of the Vienna Cabinet had contributed its share to this attitude of the Berlin Government.

If the views of the British Chargé d'Affaires should be corroborated by subsequent events, I cannot but believe that the Berlin Cabinet has been chiefly influenced by the fact that Russia and England, while not refusing to give Germany those explanations which she had a right to demand, have yielded only formally *without relinquishing the least part of the political rights to which, in view of their geographical position and the interests at stake, they are entitled to lay claim.*

(105) *Extract from a Report submitted by M. Sazonoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Czar concerning his Visit to Balmoral in October* 1912.

. . . . . With regard to the neutral zone, I said that sooner or later we should probably be obliged to revise our mutual attitude towards it *with the view of annulling it entirely,*[1] *since in the present state of affairs, access to this neutral one is open to everybody, so that it was not protected against the designs of third parties.* Of course, we should have to endeavour to secure the consent of Persia to any such revision, since a revision without such consent would have no practical significance. *Grey agreed to this on principle. At the same time he suggested that an attempt should be made to render once for all impossible undesirable German designs on the neutral zone by Russia securing from the Persian Government the option for the construction of the railway line from Teheran to Ispahan, and England and Russia jointly for the section from Ispahan to Mohammera.*[2] *It is understood that the securing of these options shall oblige neither the one nor the other Power to actually carry out the enterprise in question, but that the object shall chiefly be to drive*

[1] Persia was to be annexed entirely.
[2] The quickest way to securing an immediate lien upon the neutral zone.

Germany out of the neutral zone where, after the conclusion of such a Convention, there would not remain a single concession which the Germans would find tempting.[1]

I replied that I was prepared to instruct our Minister at Teheran to try and obtain such an option from Persia by all means in his power, *if it were at all possible to secure an option from the Persian Government which would actually render vain any efforts which other Powers might make in the neutral zone; a fact of which I was not entirely convinced.*[2]

(106) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Extract from Personal Letter, Aug.* 4-17, 1910.

. . . *There is danger that England and Russia may be forced by the course events are taking to do the very thing in Persia which at bottom they wish to avoid.* In this respect I deem it my duty to inform you candidly of the point of view taken by the British Government.

Just as with us, there is a certain disappointment noticeable here with regard to the course matters are taking at Teheran; this disappointment is intensified by the absolute lack of capable persons in Persia, and the hopelessness of seeing normal conditions re-established, though I think that the present Persian Ministry is looked upon as being more efficient than its predecessor.[3]

Still, the two Representatives at Teheran foresee *that, sooner or later, the possibility of an intervention will arise, which might even lead to a partition of Persia or at least to a sort of condominium. Such a conclusion the British Government will most emphatically resist.*[4]

For one thing, England desires no more annexations;[5] she knows from experience how a Government may be forced to resort to such a measure. She does not wish to occupy Persia, because she is convinced that this cannot be done without a war. And then I

[1] And yet Grey complained constantly that the Germans doubted him.
[2] Not convinced that the Persian government would in this manner abdicate.
[3] Efficiency was being measured in terms of compliance to Russo-British dictation.
[4] Its primary purpose in Persia being to fetter Russian enterprise which in the past had been directed against Afghanistan, to wit: India.
[5] Not in keeping with later facts.

should like to direct your attention to the fact that the English viewpoint is of a negative nature. *England has not so much an interest in what is going on in Persia as that she wants to prevent any other Power (excepting herself and Russia) from playing a part in that country. This refers in the first place to Germany and to Turkey, for political reasons, be it understood.* And this is why England has been so cautious whenever it was a question of protecting her commercial interests.

However, in this respect she has had to change her views of late. The disturbances in Southern Persia are much more serious than was at first believed; the dissatisfaction in English commercial circles is constantly growing, and the Government dares not expose itself to being charged in Parliament with having done less for the protection of British interests in the South, than Russia has been doing in the North; *this is the explanation for the landing of troops in the South.*[1]

But this very fact again is regarded by the British Government as a perilous beginning, and for this very reason England has always been adverse to a military occupation. *Her political interests do not coincide with her commercial interests. In the eyes of the British Government, the former constitute the decisive factor.* What the British Government fears most is the necessity of following our lead, or rather, that proposed by our representatives at Teheran. But this must by no means lead to the conclusion that England would be altogether adverse to supporting the maintenance of order in Persia; she is only unwilling to resort to means which would be apt to *inflame oriental fanaticism against either herself or Russia.*[2]

As far as I have been able to judge the English viewpoint, what people fear most here is that by exerting a pressure on Persia, that country might be forced to appeal to other Powers for assistance, in other words, to Germany and Turkey. I need not enter upon the question in which direction our political interests tend, but I cannot help stating that what is true with regard to England, is still more with reference to us. *Northern Persia is another Manchuria,*[3] *and cannot be incorporated by us without a war—and what a*

[1] British troops. [3] The ire of her vast Moslem population in the colonies.
[2] As Russia viewed it.

war! ! ! If I enter into this question thus at length, it is only because I consider the present hour to be full of peril. A military intervention on our part would necessarily entail a similar measure on the part of England; we could not expect that she should keep aloof, and from that moment on the condominium, with all the peril it would entail, would begin.

Permit me to repeat what I already wrote to you: Owing to the fact that we have made the occupation of Kaswin the subject matter of negotiations with the Persian Government, the numerous political schemers at Teheran have secured a weapon dangerous for us; for these people cannot fail to understand that the occupation of Kaswin cannot but further their cause. *It is to their interest that the savage and blind fanaticism of the masses against us shall continue to increase.* The Persian Government thereby obtains an argument which it can use at one moment in the Persian Parliament and the next moment with the other Powers. And if in reply we should say that the presence of Russian troops only serves to maintain general order and security, *the Persian Government is now in the position to respond that this is not true, because Russia is making use of the negotiations concerning the withdrawal of the troops in order to secure further advantages for herself.*

The intention of appointing subjects of the great Powers to positions in the Persian service is a clear proof of the extent to which Persia is already directing her gaze abroad. Italy may perhaps refuse. *This country is not fond of direct conflicts.* But can the same be said of all the Powers? Before resolving upon the one or the other measure, one must consider whether the trend of affairs will not lead us to a direct and thorough-going interference in Persian matters.

III

RUSSIAN AND BRITISH IMPERIALISM VS. MORGAN SHUSTER

(August 1910—January 1912)

(107) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 5-18, 1910.

The Persian Government has introduced a Bill into Parliament relating to the appointment of foreigners, *without having previously communicated with the two Legations.*[1] Without exerting strong pressure it will be impossible to obtain a withdrawal of the Bill. As our main object is to prevent the appointment of German or Austrian instructors in the Persian army, it might possibly prove sufficient to declare that the appointment of subjects of a great Power as instructors, might induce Russia and England to place some of their own subjects in Persian services.

(108) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Aug.* 24-*Sept.* 6, 1910.

In the course of a few days Parliament will decide on the question relative to the appointment of foreigners. *It is believed that either Swiss or Americans will be appointed to posts in the Ministry of Finance. Parliament is averse to the appointment of Belgians. As regards the Swiss, the British Minister, speaking in the name of his Government, has expressed the hope that they will not belong to the German-Swiss Cantons, as they would otherwise enjoy the protection of the German Legation.* The Americans appear to have the biggest chances, they being now all the more popular since the American Minister here has refused to sign the Note of Protest jointly sub-

[1] Which was its right, under the principle of sovereignty.

mitted by the diplomatic corps relating to the monopoly of trade in hides.

(109) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Telegram, Aug. 26-Sept. 8, 1910.*

We believe that in itself the appointment of Americans as financial Advisers will not in any way endanger our interests; *however, the mere fact that subjects of a great Power are being appointed proves that the Persians do not desire to follow the advice given by Russia and England.* Besides, the appointment of Americans constitutes a precedent in view of which it will prove hard to prevent the appointment of the subjects of other great Powers, and hence an enlargement of the sphere of influence of these latter. I have spoken to O'Beirne in respect to this point.

(110) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug. 28-Sept. 10, 1910. No. 564.*

I concur with your views that the appointment of Americans will not impair our interests, but doubt whether this might be construed as a case in precedent since the United States are not a European Great Power, and since they pursue no political aims in Persia. Still, it cannot be denied that the Persian Government has not followed our advice in this regard. *However, without resorting to extreme measures, we shall be unable to cause the decision arrived at to be cancelled.* If our two Governments desire to avoid this it would be best to disregard the question entirely so far as the Persian Government is concerned, and to address ourselves to the Governments of those countries from among the subjects of which the Persian Government desires to obtain its foreign advisers. *To constantly tender advice to this Government which is never followed,*[1] *only lessens our prestige.*

(111) *The Russian Ambassador at Washington to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept. 20-Oct. 3, 1910.*

I have received a Memorial from the Department of State, the translation of which reads as follows:

[1] Such methods contributed constantly toward making international affairs one long crisis. Governments friendly disposed toward Russia would have respected its wishes, while governments with threatened commercial interests in Persia would have been obliged to answer the Russians in a manner that would have given offense.

"The Department of State duly appreciates the statements made by the Russian and British Governments that the United States had no special interests in Persia. In reply to an inquiry, Great Britain has caused the Federal Government to be informed, through the American Embassy in London, that "Both Governments had agreed not to raise at all this question in Persia."

"Up to the present, the Department of State has received no inquiry on the part of Persia with regard to the appointment of American Advisers, and the Department is not awaiting any such step. Consequently no cause exists for taking any measures in this connection."

(112) *Sazonoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London. Telegram, Sept.* 13-26, 1910. *No.* 1420.

I have recently told the British Chargé d'Affaires that in view of the disinclination shown by the Persians to comply with our just demands,[1] and the impossibility of settling even unimportant current questions, *I anticipate that we shall have to exert pressure upon Persia; and I have asked him whether the London Cabinet were of the same opinion.*

O'Beirne has asked Grey, and then told me that the latter was rather adverse to any project of exerting joint pressure. I replied in return that I shall not insist on maintaining my view in order not to disturb the existing understanding in Persian affairs, *but that I shall probably be compelled to resort to coercive measures on my own account; thus for example we should refuse to make an exception to the general rule forbidding any transit trade through the Caucasus in favour of Persians,*[2] *and the like.*

(113) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept.* 15-28, 1910. *No.* 242.

Your telegram No. 1420 received.

In consideration of the fact that it will be most undesirable to allow anything to interfere with the Anglo-Russian agreement in Persia, Grey wired to the British Minister at Teheran, instructing him to support his Russian colleague in the negotiations with the Persian Govern-

[1] Popular resentment of the Persians against the division of their country.
[2] Embargo used to make the Persians amenable to Russian wishes.

ment, on the understanding, however, that our troops shall be recalled in the near future. As England will, in consequence, most probably resort to stronger measures in Persia, *she will in turn have to reinforce the number of the troops she is maintaining as a guard in Southern Persia.*

(114) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Telegram, Sept.* 16-29, 1910.

The British Chargé d'Affaires told me yesterday that Grey could admit of no differences of opinion in Persian matters, and that he intended to adhere strictly to the terms of our understanding. *He is prepared to exercise joint pressure on the Persians and he expects that we, for our part, will support him in the question of protecting the South-Persian roads.*[1]

(115) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept.* 18-*Oct.* 1, 1910.

The British Minister has received categorical instructions to support our demands. Grey adds that the solidarity of the two Legations was far more important than any considerations relating to the maintaining in office of the present Persian Ministry.

(116) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Very Secret Letter, Sept.* 25-*Oct.* 8, 1910. *No.* 884.

As you already know *we have succeeded in inducing the London Cabinet to consent to joint pressure being exerted on the Persian Government in order to oblige this latter to accept the terms subject to which we are prepared to withdraw our troops from Kaswin,* and in order also to settle as quickly as possible the question of the conversion and unification of the sums owed to our Bank.

Sir Edward Grey has sent the necessary instructions to the British Minister at Teheran and has pointed out the necessity of

[1] Grey's and Sazonoff's mind were about to meet on a plane that was to be created by situations and contingencies as they developed. Neither the Russian nor the British diplomatists seemed to realize that such was the ultimate hope, if not plan, of both men.

conforming to the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Convention, and of allowing no differences of opinion to prevail in connection with questions of a fundamental nature touching the policy to be pursued in Persia.

Considerations, which are based on a firm foundation, prompt me to say that the London Cabinet looks upon the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 *as being important for the Asiatic interests of England; but that this Convention possesses a still greater importance for England from the viewpoint of the policy which is being pursued by England in Europe.*[1] For this reason we need entertain no doubts but that political circles in England are actually desirous of adhering strictly to the terms of the Anglo-Russian Convention.

These considerations are of great moment for us, as we may rest assured that the English, engaged in the pursuit of political aims of vital importance in Europe, may, in case of necessity, be prepared to sacrifice certain interests in Asia in order to keep a Convention alive which is of such importance to them. This is a circumstance which we can, of course, exploit for ourselves, as, for instance, in Persian affairs.[2]

For the present we must wait and see the results of the joint steps which you and your British colleague are to undertake. If the Persians accept our terms, we shall withdraw our troops from Persia. Perhaps this will at last produce a fundamental change in Persian policy, and we shall then be able to settle under normal conditions the large number of unsettled questions, that have heaped up in the course of the last few years. I must, however, confess that I have little hope that the Persians will prove compliant *seeing that they have obviously lost the ability of adapting themselves to the altered political situation.*[3] If, notwithstanding, we do make a last attempt, it is mainly prompted by the wish to put an end to an unnatural state of affairs which compels us to keep our troops in Persia, without any advantage whatsoever, and also because we would exhaust all possible means of arriving at a peaceable solution of the question before resorting to stronger measures.

In no case, however, can we allow things to go on in the way

[1] The reduction of Germany.
[2] Which Russia did—not only in Persia but also in China, as shown by the documents.
[3] To wit: Resented still the occupation and proposed partition of the country.

they have done up to the present. *We can no longer permit a state of affairs to continue in which not only the interests but also the authority and the prestige of Russia, are bound to suffer.* For this reason we shall have to adopt coercive measures, as already stated in my telegram No. 1420, if this our last attempt should prove futile.

To repeat, I do not think matters will pass off without our having been obliged to exert pressure on the Persian Government. In any case, the exact plan to be followed in carrying these measures into effect must be worked out in order to be able, if necessary, to employ it at once. In this connection, we must in the first place keep in view the fact that these measures are not intended to obtain satisfaction in certain concrete questions, but that they are rather intended to convince the Persians that our wishes must not be constantly opposed *and that they must give up their demonstrative, unfriendly policy toward Russia.*[1] *For this reason these measures must by no means assume the character of our wishing to arrive at an understanding with the Persians.* We must not begin to bargain with them, but we must convince them that we do not intend to resume friendly relations with Persia merely on this or that concession being granted, but only when their entire policy towards us has undergone a radical change.

I am also proceeding from the consideration that Persia needs us much more than we do Persia; and we command sufficient means of making this plain to them. *My idea is that we might for this purpose resort to a system of petty annoyances,*[2] *such, for instance, as refusing to grant their constant requests for the import, free of duty, of various objects intended for the Court and the Government; by systematically refusing to grant recognition to newly appointed Persian Consuls; by conferring no more Russian distinctions upon Persian officials; by insisting, more strongly than up to the present, that the Persian Minister here shall pay the rent for the Legation and for the disbursements in respect of telegrams,*[3] *by refusing to issue permits for the import of hides, and the*

[1] Because the Persians were opposed to becoming a Russian colony.
[2] Sazonoff in the rôle of *"agent provocateur."*
[3] A fine state of affairs, to be sure.

like, into Russia. After this, one might proceed to more weighty measures, such as refusing to grant Persia the right to purchase or transport arms and ammunition, both of such importance for Persia; creating difficulties in the import of Persian products into Russia on the pretense of their violating sanitary regulations; sending small detachments of troops for the protection of landed property belonging to our subjects in Persia; arranging with our Ministry of Finance to grant no loans or allow any other financial operations, an inhibition which will be most keenly felt by the Persians; this last, however, not to interfere with payments required for the upkeep of the cossack brigade which must not be weakened, but rather strengthened.[1]

Finally, if all these measures should prove vain, we might then resort to the extreme measures proposed by you in your telegram No. 177, namely, of refusing to keep up any diplomatic relations with the Ministry; *of stating that our troops, far from being recalled, would be reinforced; of demanding the payment of the debts; of occupying the custom houses, and finally threatening to enter Teheran.* **It will, naturally, be desirable to avoid, if possible, the adoption of such extreme measures. I share your view, however, that things will not come to such an extremity, and that the opposition of the Persians will be broken before we have exhausted this entire series of coercive measures.**

The measures which I propose are, of course, merely by way of example and I leave it entirely to you to devise the exact plan, since you are far more familiar with the local conditions.[2] **Let us therefore have your views as soon as possible, and, if need be, by telegram, should you believe the moment for employing these coercive measures to be approaching. Nor must the fact be lost sight of that some of the measures proposed will take some time to carry through, since it will be necessary to this end to communicate with the different departments concerned. I would also ask you to abstain from employing measures apt to interfere with our trade relations with Persia, and if possible also from such as would chiefly fall hard upon the poorer sections of the Persian populations,** *as for example, the labourers coming periodically*

[1] And such a mind groomed the foreign relations and affairs of a mighty empire.

[2] Mere hints as to how far one might go.

over to Russia; since it would be unjust to make such people suffer for the misdemeanours of the Persian Government.[1] It is this consideration which has also induced me to refrain from coercive measures which in themselves would prove very effective, such as the re-introduction of passport-fees in favour of the Red Cross, and the refusal to visé Persian passports.

We could, of course, count upon quicker results if the pressure to be exerted on Persia were brought to bear upon her not only by us, but also by England. *However, I see no prospect in the present situation of affairs of inducing England to take part in the system of coercive measures contemplated by us.* On the other hand, I am convinced that the present action of the Persians is not only affecting our interests but those of the English as well, since it is estranging Persia from us and furthering the introduction of German influences; a fact as little compatible with our own, as with British interests. Should you succeed in convincing the British Minister at Teheran of this, then his reports to London might perhaps induce Grey to join us. However, this is a mere idea on my part, and I do not know whether you can carry it out.

But, of course, I do not deem it necessary that you inform your British colleague of all the details of our plan, still less that you devise details together with him, since this would undoubtedly increase his opposition to our system.[2]

(117) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct.* 13-26, 1910.

Your letter No. 884 received.

The steps taken by me so far, in which I was supported by the British Minister, have as yet yielded no results. The ministry made me a proposal yesterday, which in fact, means a step forward, but which, nevertheless, is not acceptable, so that I have refused to submit it to you, *although of course I shall do so by post.*

In any case, political circles here appear to comprehend the necessity of establishing normal relations with us, all the more,

[1] An admission that the excesses of his troops in Persia were not always justified.

[2] Barclay opposed the Russian minister at Teheran almost constantly.

as disturbances are breaking out in all parts of the country, and it is believed that these disturbances are being supported by us. I have more gratifying news to report as to the negotiations in connection with the conversion,[1] the hopes entertained of an early resignation of the Ministry, and the anticipated arrival of the Regent.

In order to force the Persian Government to yield to our wishes, I deem it necessary to insist on my present demands, and at the same time to abstain from discussing all other current questions. *The coercive measures (1st and 2nd category) which you propose, are not of a nature to at once produce a strong effect since a seasonable opportunity must be waited for until they can be employed. It will however prove expedient to refuse the Persians the transit of all objects including arms and ammunition; furthermore, we should not only refuse the recognition of the Persian Consuls, but also of all Governors and other officials who are not agreeable to us; we should demand payment from the Persian Legation at St. Petersburg;* assume a neutral attitude in the conflict between the Government and the revolutionaries, and finally grant no financial aid whatsoever to Persia.

Finally, we might completely ignore Mukhbir,[2] and I could, in certain cases, act perfectly independently in order to secure redress for any rights of Russian subjects that had been violated. The measures with regard to the hides would not be desirable, since the effect would be felt by Persian merchants, and not by the Government; any reprisals on the Persian import to Russia would likewise only cause damage to our trade.[3] Should our relations to Persia come to a crisis, and should the Government of the Shah persist in infringing our rights, the most effective means to bring home to the great mass of the population the state of affairs that had been created, would be to entirely close our frontiers. The extreme measures indicated by you would then follow as a logical sequence. My personal opinion, however, is that the Persians will yield before this point has been reached, and the arrival of

[1] Of certain loans and bond issues.
[2] Persian minister of foreign affairs.
[3] Showing that Poklewski-Koziel was a better statesman than Sazonoff, his superior.

the Regent as early as possible would certainly go far to relieve the situation.

(118) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Jan.* 15-28, 1911. *No.* 62.

The appointment of American experts is contrary to our Convention with England to the effect that the Persian Government was not to appoint any subjects of Great Powers,[1] *this again would give Germany the possibility of insisting on the appointment of German experts. The French Ambassador, who is very much disturbed by this fact, is of the opinion that the German Government will certainly avail itself of the opportunity which thus offers itself. I would ask you to ascertain as soon as possible to what extent the Americans are entitled to maintain that England is raising no objection to the appointment of Americans.*

(119) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Jan.* 19-*Feb.* 1, 1911. *No.* 13.

Your telegram No. 62 received.

Grey writes me privately that when the Russian and British Government discussed this question last September they had agreed that the appointment of Americans should raise no difficulties, the United States not being a Great Power in Europe, and as a result of this decision the Ministers at Teheran had made a corresponding communication to the Persian Government on Sept. 29.

If you do so desire, Grey is prepared to make official inquiries as to whether the United States intends to insist on this point. Grey however believes it will be difficult to alter the attitude taken up last September. **He does not believe that the Persians will appoint any other foreigners except Americans,** *if Russia and England should declare that in such a case they will have to insist on the appointment of Russians and Englishmen.*[2] **Buchanan has orders to talk to you about this matter. He himself was on leave in September and knows nothing of these negotiations.**

[1] On September 8th, 1910, Sazonoff was not entirely of that opinion.

[2] To which the Persians objected, because employing Russians and Englishmen appeared dangerous, placing Persia more and more under the control of the two imperial governments.

(120) *Neratoff, Acting Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, June 28-July 11, 1911.*

Our minister at Teheran wires sub No. 1524 as follows:

It turns out that one of the new Americans is to be an officer who is intended to organise a special military police to act as tax collectors in the service of the Treasurer-General. The British Minister has communicated to me as a secret that Shuster [1] had offered the post to Stokes who is leaving his post as Military Attaché to the British Legation at Teheran next October. The letter points to the fact that Stokes' field of activity will lie mainly, though not exclusively in Southern Persia.

I beg to point out that this appointment of Stokes would run counter to the principle that only the subjects of minor Powers shall be allowed to accept such posts. *Besides, it seems to me that we could only approve of the appointment of Stokes provided a Russian officer were to be appointed to fulfil a similar function within our sphere of influence, or if the organisation of the Persian forces were entrusted to us.* However, I think this latter will be scarcely possible while the present Parliament lasts.

(121) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, July 4-17, 1911. No. 903.*

The appointment of Stokes would have an unfavourable effect on public opinion in Russia,[2] and would cause rumours to arise as to differences of opinion between Russia and England in regard to Persia. Please ask the London Cabinet whether it would not care to exert a pressure on Stokes in order to induce him to refuse the post offered him. *We fear that otherwise we should be under the necessity of demanding compensations, such for example, as the reorganisation of the Persian forces by Russian officers.*

(122) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, July 4-17, 1911. No. 149.*

The Stokes incident is very much regretted here and it is feared that complications will arise, the more so as, when Stokes actually takes his discharge, it will prove difficult to exert any in-

[1] Morgan Shuster, United States citizen; financial adviser of the Persian government.

[2] Public opinion in Russia was moulded by a governmentally controlled press. The manner of control is indicated in these documents.

fluence on him, *and Shuster also appears to have a character hard to deal with.*

(123) *The Russian Ambassador at London to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Telegram, July* 4-17, 1911. *No.* 150.

Confidential. Nicolson informs me in confidence that there is a possibility of Stokes and even Shuster resigning. Great importance is attached to the incident here.

(124) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, July* 13-26, 1911. *No.* 160.

Grey told me to-day, Stokes had been asked to quit the English service. He thinks this was sufficiently plain. Grey does not wish to take any further steps, as this might cause Shuster to resign, and he might then be accused of having put obstacles in the way of the financial reorganisation of Persia as he otherwise looks upon Shuster as the proper person. However, Grey also appreciates your point of view, and has no objection to offer if we were to demand compensation and were to refer to the fact that Stokes is an Englishman. Grey will not oppose this point of view at Teheran, which would prove that both Governments are acting in concert.

(125) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Aug.* 4-17, 1911. *No.* 189.

Grey has asked me to call upon him. He told me that he could not but gather from the advices which he had received from St. Petersburg, that you did not entirely do justice to the efforts he had made. *Stokes has been refused his discharge until the entire incident is settled.*[1] It thus follows that the personal interests of Stokes play no part in influencing Grey's attitude; he, Grey, had found the Persian reply inadequate, and had at once informed Shuster that a subject of a minor Power would have to be appointed in place of Stokes; *he had seconded all our protests at Teheran.*[2]

[1] To wit: He was being retained in the British military service and prevented from entering the Persian fiscal police service.

[2] His real reason being that this made it impossible for the Russian government to claim "compensations," such as putting the Persian army under a Russian officer.

Grey reminded me of the public statements he had made in Parliament, and he added that he had hoped they would have made a better impression in Russia. *I replied that I had received a telegram from you asking me again to point out to him the extreme gravity of the situation.* I added that it appeared that the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg had failed to inform you of the fact that the Persian reply had been regarded as inadequate in London, and of the steps since then undertaken as to Shuster. Finally, Grey said that he might be accused in Parliament of concerning himself more with Russian interests in the North, than with the British in the South, where the situation is constantly growing worse. For this reason he now asked you to take the initiative and he, for his part, would support you at Teheran.

(126) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Aug.* 6-19, 1911. *No.* 1101.

We learn that the British Minister at Teheran has received instructions to communicate to the Persian Government *that if it insists on the appointment of Stokes, the British Government will refuse to permit this officer to resign from the English service.* This communication will dispose of the whole question, and I see in this decision of Grey's another proof of the unanimity of our action in Persia.

(127) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Neratoff. Telegram, Aug.* 9-22, 1911. *No.* 703.

Shuster called on me yesterday and informed me that in view of the recent steps undertaken by the two Governments in the Stokes affair, *there was nothing left for him to do but to publish a statement explaining the reasons which paralyze his activity in Persia. The main reason is the change of attitude taken up by England, which has taken place as a result of our influence; and this circumstance prompts him to hand in his resignation.*

Returning to the Stokes affair, he declared that there was no person in Persia really fit to undertake the reorganisation of the financial gendarmerie since even the Swedish officers who have just arrived, declare that they would hardly be able to do any

useful work before the lapse of a year, being, as they are, unfamiliar with the local conditions and the language. Yet every delay in the collection of the customs threatens complete ruin to Persia, and will make it impossible even to commence any financial reforms.

Shuster points to the fact that any exercise of generosity in this question could only serve to heighten Russia's prestige and he, for his part, was prepared to engage himself that Stokes will only remain six months at Teheran and will then be sent to the South, while the control of the gendarmerie in Northern Persia will be handed over to the charge of officers belonging to one of the smaller Powers, or even to Russia, provided the Russian Government should so desire. In view of the suspicion harboured by the Persians, it was difficult for him (Shuster) to enter upon a formal engagement in this respect, but he cherishes the hope of finally obtaining even this from the Persians. He mentioned the negotiations he had entered into with the house of Seligmann, and he declared himself ready to hasten the conclusion of the conversion-loan with all means at his disposal, on the condition that the Persian Government were to dispose of a million Pounds sterling.

In conclusion, *Shuster assured me that in his future activity in Persia he would duly consider the interests of both Russia and England, and he begged me to bring this to the knowledge of the Russian Government. I promised to do so, but extended no hopes as to his proposal meeting with complete approval.*

I must confess that I have been impressed by the conversation with Shuster; there certainly can be no doubt that Shuster's resignation would cause many difficulties to the British Government, both in the English, and particularly, in the American press. *Perhaps our Government will consider it possible to accept Shuster's proposal, seeing that we have obtained full satisfaction in the Stokes affair. Should this be the case, we might ask Shuster to give us his written promise that he will fulfil the conditions relating to Stokes and the conclusion of the loan.* Besides, it would be preferable to allow Stokes to remain in the British service, in order to enable the British Government likewise to exercise an influence upon his actions in the future.

(128) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Aug. 10-23, 1911. No. 193.*

During the negotiations as to Stokes, *both Grey and Nicolson have repeatedly expressed their anxiety that the possibility of Shuster's resignation would once again render questionable any serious reform of Persian finances;* this in itself would be very regrettable, and would call forth strong opposition. I believe that it will be to our interest duly to consider this fact, *now that our point of view has in principle found recognition, and that the statements made by Shuster to our Minister prove that his attitude is changing and that he now appeals to us as a last resort.* Should Your Excellency share my views, then, it would appear to me desirable to arrive at a decision relating to this as speedily as possible, *in order to confer upon it the character of a generous concession granted in the interest of Persia,*[1] *and before an agitation sets in here and at Teheran.*

(129) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Oct. 7-20, 1911.*

I have forwarded to you an article published in the "Times" relating to the public accusations made by Shuster. *The latter alleges that Russia and England are violating the independence and integrity of Persia.*[2] The proof for this allegation he sees in the breaking-off of his negotiations with our Minister in connection with the organisation of a special gendarmerie and the temporary part which he had destined for Major Stokes. *The "Times" denies these charges, both in regard to Russia and England.*[3] Whilst Sir Arthur Nicolson told me with great concern that he had received bad news from Persia, he made no allusion to this matter, with respect to which I have no other information but that published in the "Times." Nicolson spoke only of the possibility of a Ministerial crisis, the probability of the formation of a radical nationalist Cabinet and the resignation of the Persian Regent.

I should not deem it necessary to point to the connection existing between these two events, *were it not that I believe the article in the "Times"—which is clearly written with the view of avoiding*

[1] Mr. Shuster enjoyed the confidence of the Persian Parliament.
[2] No allegation at all was necessary, as is shown herein.
[3] The "Times" could not be expected to do anything else.

difficulties between Russia and England and to prepare the English public—plainly reproduces the view taken of the whole matter in England and makes only an indirect allusion to the extremely difficult position in which Grey will find himself when Parliament reopens.

It cannot be disputed that the British Government, from the beginning, attached too little weight to the importance of the Stokes affair. Still, it must be considered that as soon as its attention was directed to the significance of the matter, Grey at once drew the necessary conclusions. *He even went so far as to employ a means—namely the refusal to grant Stokes his discharge—the legality of which may be challenged. I do not doubt but that, in so acting, he was prompted by the desire strictly to maintain our entente in Persia, whereby he can scarcely have had any illusions as to the difficulties which would thereby result for himself.* For I believe that he personally considered acceptable the proposal made by our Minister at Teheran.

For, putting aside the question of the Anglo-Russian Convention, he must needs bear in mind the impossible conditions in Persia, which damage British interests in the South, much more than ours in the North.

In this respect it is easy to attack Grey in Parliament where Shuster's accusations have found a much louder echo than is desirable for us.

English public opinion will see in the present conditions in Persia the commencement of an armed intervention which, even if unintentional, has, nevertheless, actually become necessary, and to which England is decidedly averse.

I do not wish to mention again the considerations which I tried to emphasize in my previous reports. The capital and the Persian seat of Government are situated within our zone. *I mean that for this reason we are not entitled to insist that the actions of the Persian Government mainly concern Russia.*[1] *This would be tantamount to a Russian protectorate, with merely a certain sphere of influence being conceded to British interests in the South, analogous to what is taking place in Morocco between France and Spain.*[2] There exists quite a

[1] A hint to Neratoff.

[2] An endorsement of the position assumed in this matter by Germany and Spain, who objected to this very thing, but were overruled by France, who imposed the protectorate, with the aid of Great Britain and Russia.

series of questions which touch Persia as a whole and which equally interest both our Governments, and with respect to which an understanding must be arrived at. The maintenance of public order and of finances may be numbered among these questions.

I confess that I only see the possibility of compromises when it is a question of keeping up such a difficult state of affairs. Compromises at first between England and Russia, and subsequently between these two Powers and Persia. This, to my mind, is, if not the literal wording, but the inner meaning of the Anglo-Russian Convention. Otherwise, this latter could not be applied, just as every international agreement is difficult to apply if it does not contain within itself the possibility of compromise. By compromises I understand ways and means of getting out of a difficulty by making concessions of the kind which our Prime Minister has made in the matter of the Seligmann loan.[1]

It seems to me urgent that a similar solution be found to enable a gendarmerie to be organised in Persia. *If I persist in these considerations, I do so exclusively because I fear that our two Governments will be accused of being unable to arrive at an understanding in order to put an end to the state of anarchy in Persia, and of failing to attempt any effective steps to this end. I fear that this accusation will assume a more and more substantial shape and will be mainly directed against Russia.*[2]

This would be the beginning of immense and serious difficulties at the very moment when everything leads me to believe that a close understanding with England is more important and more necessary for us than ever.

P. S. This letter was already written when the annexed letter from Lynch appeared in this morning's issue of the "Times." *This member of parliament, who is a member of the Persian Committee, has no great influence. However, the conclusion of the letter reaches the kernel of the whole difficulty of maintaining the Anglo-Russian Entente in the event of a partition of Persia.* This is a point fraught with a great deal of danger and there is but one means of

[1] Engineered by Mr. Shuster.
[2] Which state of anarchy was being promoted by the acts of Russian troops in the furtherance of Russian designs in Persia, as shown herein.

facing it, namely, by coming to an understanding with the British Government for the purpose of re-establishing order *and a certain degree of prosperity in Persia.*[1]

(130) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 246.

Grey asked me to call on him. *He first told me that Major Stokes has been definitely refused permission to quit the service, so that this whole matter was now settled. Thereupon Grey went on to say that he had been very much disturbed to learn from O'Beirne*[2] *that Russia reckoned with the possibility of a military expedition or the occupation of Northern Persia.* He explained to me the extraordinary and momentous consequence of such a step: *Persia's independence would be violated; the Anglo-Russian Convention would become void, and the necessity of its revision under excessively difficult circumstances would have to be taken into consideration.* He pointed out that whatever Shuster's attitude might be, it had so far been merely a question of certain tendencies and not of measures already adopted, such, for example, as concessions, running counter to our interests, or loans. *Shuster had actually done nothing to warrant the necessity of a military expedition. As regards the reigning anarchy, he thought conditions in the South were much worse than in the North, where we command a far more numerous force than the couple of hundred English that had been sent to Ispahan, Shiraz and Bushir.* Besides this, Grey has informed the Persian Government that if the latter were able to effectively provide for the protection of the lines of communication in the South, the British troops would only be employed as a consular guard.

Grey then added his personal opinion that it would be impossible for Shuster to remain. He was not equal to the situation. He (Grey) as yet knew of the charges brought forward by Shuster against the two Governments only what was published in the newspapers. He deems it beneath the dignity of the two Governments to reply to these charges officially, and he intends to maintain this view most energetically in Parliament.

[1] A certain degree only, while Mr. Shuster wanted to make Persia a solvent state.

[2] British chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg.

(131) *The Same to the Same. Extract from a Letter, Oct.* 11-24, 1911.

. . . Sir Edward thereupon told me that one should not entertain any illusion as to the fact that a fresh military occupation of Persia would violate the principle of the integrity and independence of that country, and that the Anglo-Russian Convention, being based on this principle, would hence become void. Sir Edward insisted in an absolutely friendly but urgent manner upon the fact that he hoped that the Russian Government would take the serious consequences into consideration, *and he once again mentioned the circumstance that Shuster, though he had evinced anti-Russian feelings, had so far not undertaken anything positive against Russia.*

He then said to me:

"If the Convention should become void, you may yourself judge of the consequences. No other solution would remain than to proceed to a revision of the Convention, but under peculiarly difficult circumstances, and on a basis which it would be harder than ever to discover."

I found Grey convinced of the necessity of maintaining our Convention as it is, *but he opposes every step which would put Persia's independence in question.* . . . . . England's projects in Southern Persia are actually most intimately connected with the extremely intricate problem of the whole Bagdad line. For this reason, I beg to repeat that if we adhere to the wording of the Anglo-Russian Convention down to the very last consequences, the Anglo-Russian Convention which is already obliged at every step to overcome the ill-will and the incapacity of the Persians, will be most difficult to carry into execution, and that *for this very reason we shall have to resort to compromises and to the expression of mutual good faith. Above all, the fact must not be lost sight of that if the effect of the Russian understanding with England is to-day constantly tending to expand, Persia remains the basis of our understanding with England.*[1] *This is a circumstance of the very greatest importance.*

[1] A vicarious sacrifice. The many allusions of this nature found in the documents refer to the main considerations Russia and Great Britain saw in the Anglo-Russian Convention. Both governments recognized in the agreement regarding Persia the basis for joint action against Germany. Their diplomatists express themselves elsewhere herein to the effect that such a vehicle of contact was necessary to keep up the relations needed for the final objective.

(132) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Oct. 26-Nov. 8, 1911. No. 1730.*

I am telegraphing to our Minister at Teheran as follows:

In connection with the "Shoa-Es-Saltaneh" incident,[1] the Persian Chargé d'Affaires has asked us to be satisfied with the military police being replaced by Cossacks, and not to insist on an apology for the insults offered to the consular officers. He asked that this request be submitted to the Czar. *We have told the Persian Representative in reply that the Czar had already given his orders and that the Russian Government insists on all its demands being complied with.* Persia should therefore hasten to comply with the demands made in order to prevent further consequences. As regards the offering of apologies, these were to be made in respect of acts committed personally by the military police against consular officers, so that our demand could not be humiliating for the Persian Government.

(133) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct. 26-Nov. 8, 1911. No. 1732.*

Your telegram received.

We are convinced that, under similar circumstances, the British Government would never allow the action of a British official to be made the subject of an inquiry in which Persians would be allowed to take part. *We, for our part, are of the opinion that we alone are entitled to form a judgment with regard to an action committed by our official.* The measures mentioned by the English press have not yet been taken into consideration; should however, the Persian Government persist in remaining obstinate, we must find a means to protect our interests. The expeditions to Ghilan and Talysh had already been contemplated before this incident occurred, since the state of affairs in these districts is extremely unsafe and is seriously damaging our interests, and since the Persian Government appears to be unable to restore order there.

This measure is, however, intended to have the character of a punitive expedition,[2] *and not that of a permanent occupation.*

[1] See Neratoff's No. 1798. (Document No. 135.)

[2] It was the many "punitive expeditions" undertaken by Russian troops that kept the British public and press exercised and which worried Grey.

(134) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Oct. 29-Nov.* 11, 1911. *No.* 278.

Personal. I should be wanting in necessary frankness if I were to refrain from expressing how disagreeably I was affected by your telegram No. 1732 as it contained an indirect criticism of myself. Permit me to remark the following: It will be impossible to maintain that two Great Powers, such as Russia and England, uniting themselves in a country such as Persia for a joint action, will be able to do this without certain difficulties arising in the course of execution. This is what renders so difficult our joint activity in Persia, though that activity forms the basis of our understanding. What is primarily necessary is mutual support; however, Northern Persia, with the capital, is more liable to lead to incidents than the South. We therefore are more often obliged to address ourselves to England, than the latter to us. This to a certain extent always impairs the interests of England.

I admit that this mutual support, which is necessary, less for the solution of the questions themselves, than on account of the impression in Persia, will only be possible through constant exchange of views as to the incidents that may occur. In the contrary case, the aforementioned difference in the situation of the two countries will jeopardize the principle of co-operation. If ever our co-operation with England should come to an end, the consequences would be of a serious nature. You will thus understand what responsibility would in such an event fall on my shoulders, and I must therefore always convey my opinions with absolute frankness to the Ministry. It is true, Grey has repeatedly assured me that he would not sacrifice the principle of the entente to the difficulties existing in Persia. This has been Grey's line of conduct in difficult circumstances, notably when he had to take action against British subjects, the most thankless task for a Minister of Foreign Affairs. But Grey is not the sole master of events, and it is upon this point of view that I have to base my reports. You will please excuse the length of this personal telegram, but I deem it absolutely necessary to make this explanation.[1]

[1] Neratoff was under-secretary of foreign affairs and a troublesome statesman, as these documents show.

(135) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov. 3-16, 1911. No.* 1798.

I would request you to communicate to the London Cabinet the following:

The attitude assumed of late towards us by the Persian Government has, as is well known, been anything but friendly, and the responsibility for this fact falls mainly upon the financial adviser, Morgan Shuster, who from the moment of his arrival in Persia, disregarded Russian interests.

This foreigner has found strong support both in Parliament as among the Persian nationalists, so that the Teheran Cabinet did not possess the necessary authority over him. An incident has recently occurred at Teheran, on the occasion when the Persian Government expressed its intention to confiscate the estates of the partisans of the former Shah, amongst others, also of the Shoa-Es-Saltaneh, in whose estate Russian interests were involved. Shuster received instructions to carry these measures into effect, and also in this case failed not to assume a provocative attitude. *The gendarmerie under his orders have not only forcibly seized the estate of the Prince,* and this before the negotiations between Shuster's representatives and our Consul-General had come to a conclusion, and after they had driven the Cossacks belonging to the Persian Brigade out of the Shoa's house, but they, moreover, aimed their rifles at employees of the Consul-General and threatened to shoot.

Contrary to all tradition, the Persian Government has on its part by means of two Notes demanded that our Consul-General be recalled. *We look upon such an action as incompatible with the dignity and the interests of Russia, and we have instructed our Minister to return the said two Notes to the Persian Government and to demand verbally:*

(1) That the gendarmerie in the house belonging to the Shoa be replaced by Cossacks until the Russian interests involved in the Shoa's estate have been determined, and (2) that the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs express his regret at the action committed by the military police.

Contrary to all expectation, the Persian Government has seen fit to reject these moderate demands. We have thereupon instructed our Minister to repeat his demands in writing and to add that, in

the event of a refusal, he would break off his relations with the Persian Government and that we reserved to ourselves the right of adopting whatever measures we deemed necessary.

As we have so far received no reply, our Minister will now break off his relations with the Persian Government. *Besides this, the Russian Government has decided to order a Russian division, composed of different arms of the service, to advance on Kaswin, and it is left to the discretion of the Minister to cause the said division to proceed on to Teheran, should he think this necessary, in order forcibly to expel the Persian gendarmerie from the Shoa's estate.* This measure is naturally only of temporary character, and as soon as the incident shall have been closed and we have secured the necessary guarantees that the attitude of the Persian Government will in future be correct, our troops will be recalled.

From the telegraphic reports of the statements made by Grey in Parliament we are gratified to observe that he takes a correct view of the situation, and we, on our part, are convinced that the step we have taken does not run counter to the principles of our understanding with England; now as formerly we intend to act in full concert with England in the Persian question.

(136) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 4-17, 1911. *No.* 1810.

Buchanan,[1] who has just returned to St. Petersburg, has fully explained to me the point of view taken by Grey, pointing out that his words only referred to the period up to our decision to cause our troops to enter Persian territory. Grey considers our demands but natural; *however, in our place he would have contented himself with some other measure, such as, for instance, the occupation of the Persian custom houses.* He looks upon the sending of troops as a perilous measure both, as regards Persian affairs *per se,* as also with respect to its reaction on the Anglo-Russian agreement. Grey has instructed Buchanan to tell me and Kokowtzeff [2] that he attached great importance to maintaining good relations with us, *and that he had defended our point of view not only in Persia, but also in England. He laid stress upon the point that there did not exist*

[1] Sir George, British ambassador at St. Petersburg.
[2] Russian minister of state.

a single world question in which Russia and England did not act hand in hand.

It would, therefore, be most regrettable if a misunderstanding were to arise on account of Persia. Public opinion is extremely sensitive in Persian questions and the British Government must take this fact into account. The sending of Russian troops to Persia had disturbed people's minds in England, all the more as our action happened to coincide with the presence of King George in India, where the Moslem element might find itself disposed to give expression to its dissatisfaction with the understanding existing with Russia, in a manner disagreeable both to England and to the Monarch. *Grey therefore trusts that we will show moderation.*

Speaking personally, Buchanan added that in the last days the situation had changed. The fact of our troops having been sent forward raises the question as to what our next step will be. He asked me what our intentions were relative to the remaining of our troops in Persia; what view we had taken with regard to the Convention with England, and what effect the present occurrences would have on the administration of Persia, while at the same time expressing the hope that we would still wait before permitting our troops to enter Teheran in order to give the Persians time to reflect and to fulfil our conditions. Then, referring to the sympathy which the present Regent enjoyed in England, he added that the return of the former Shah, Muhamed Ali[1] would create decided opposition in England, and that the British Government could not recognise any such restoration, the more so as it would be the result of a military intervention.

In conclusion, he referred to the behaviour of our Consul-General and his men, and expressed doubt as to whether their conduct could be justified.

In reply, I told the Ambassador that we, for our part, highly appreciated the maintaining of good relations with England. The question as to what measures should be adopted had been submitted to mature consideration. The occupation of the custom houses would have produced no effect. *The revenues coming from the Customs in any case flow into our treasury, and the Persian Gov-*

[1] Russia's creature.

ernment would have regarded such a step as symptomatic of a certain hesitation, whereas we believe that a strong blow must be dealt in order to create the impression desired. However this may be, our troops have received orders to enter Kaswin, and our next steps will depend on the course events may take. The Persians will have time for reflection before our troops enter Teheran. One must reckon with the fact that public opinion in our own country has long ago begun to complain of the vacillating attitude assumed by the Russian Government and has demanded that stronger measures should be adopted. Our agreement with England will of course remain in force, and we shall endeavour in the further course of events to avoid everything and anything that might be apt to place the British Government in a difficult position.

As regards Persia's future: *The principle of the independence and integrity of that country will form the basis of our policy. We shall be pleased to support the present Regent, provided he proves more energetic in the future and if there be a possibility of his securing a greater share in the government of the country. The longer our troops have to remain in Persia, the higher of course will be our demands. Nor do we wish to exclude the possibility that we might have to insist on the dismissal of Shuster, although we admit that, he being a foreigner, we are not in the position to employ towards him the means otherwise customary in Persia.*[1]

In reply to Buchanan's question whether we could not make the Persians understand that by complying with our demands they might prevent the arrival of our troops on Persian territory, I replied that this was obvious, and that any further explanations on our part would merely create an impression of weakness. We could only allow the Persians to take the initiative in this direction, in which case we should not be wanting in generosity.

As concerned the conduct of our officials in the Shoa incident, I explained to Buchanan that our Counsul-General had, throughout, acted only in accordance with our rights *and the customs of the country,* with which he, owing to his many years' activity in Persia, was well familiar. A similar incident took place last summer and caused no complications whatsoever. If perhaps one of the Consul-General's subordinates had shown too much zeal, then

[1] The "means otherwise customary in Persia" were political assassination.

this may result in his being reprimanded in a disciplinary way, but it does not in any way affect the international character of the incident. *I added that British subordinates had also sometimes failed to properly attend to their duties, as for example, Major Stokes.*

I admitted Grey's obliging attitude towards us in all Persian questions; however, I reminded the Ambassador that we, too, had tacitly admitted actions on the part of England which did not correspond to our interests, such, for example, as the appointment of a financial agent at Ispahan.

Finally what concerned the restoration of Muhamed Ali, we had not thought of such an eventuality when adopting military measures.

When acquainting Grey with the above facts, I would request you to repeat that we, on our part, entertain the cordial desire to maintain good relations with him.[1]

(137) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov. 5-18, 1911. No. 280.*

Owing to a slight indisposition, I have been unable to go to the Foreign Office. Nicolson called on me, and confidentially informed me of a long telegram received from Buchanan, relating to the recent and important conversation which he had with you.

Nicolson made no comment except to give the assurance that the Cabinet would do all in its power to maintain the entente with us, to which it attached more importance than ever.

He explained to me the difficult position of Grey with regard to Parliament, since he would have to defend the attitude he had taken up in Persia and elsewhere. *I believe that the difficulty resides in the fact that Grey finds himself unable to grasp all the possible consequences of the events now taking place in Persia and to fully answer for them.* On the other hand, the opposition which Grey has to encounter in Parliament is chiefly based on the uncertainty as to what will be the final results of the Anglo-Russian policy in Persia.

This opposition is doubtless on the increase. *A Russian protectorate will no more be admitted, than would a restoration of Mu-*

[1] A diplomatic reminder that these relations could also assume a totally different character, and that Russia would brook no further interference.

hamed Ali's Government. Should the latter succeed in re-mounting the throne, or should the number of his partisans increase while our troops occupy the country, then these two occurrences would be brought into connection, and would prove right all those who maintained that this is what the Russian Government had had in mind all along, and was now about to carry into practical effect. *All faith in the Anglo-Russian Convention would be destroyed. In fact, the Convention itself could not survive this.*

Grey and Nicolson appreciate that the chief difficulty at the moment is Shuster. *The London Cabinet would have no objection if he were to disappear altogether.*[1] But the question is, how is he to be removed, since, so long as our troops remain in Persia, there is no Government left at Teheran whose authority will be recognised by the Parliament, as this latter alone appears to possess the authority and is, moreover, lending Shuster its full support. It would appear to me to be advisable for you to communicate your views in this matter to Grey, so that the two Governments might be able to act in concert. Grey is to speak in Parliament on Thursday.

(138) *The Russian Ambassador at London to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Telegram, Nov.* 6-19, 1911. *No.* 281.

Personal. Current opinion here is that the real object of our action is to secure Shuster's dismissal. *No regret would be felt here if he were to go, and no objections would be raised.* On the other hand, the restoration of Muhamed Ali will never be countenanced, it being on the contrary desired that the present Regent remain at the head of the State.

(139) *Neratoff to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Telegram, Nov.* 7-20, 1911. *No.* 833.

We entirely share your view that you should only receive the Foreign Minister provided he informs you that the Persian Government is prepared to comply with our demands. Still it is desirable to make the Persians understand without delay, in one way or the other, *that we shall no longer be satisfied with a mere fulfil-*

[1] Disappear—a rather unfortunate phrase from the pen of a diplomatist whose government was never particular as to what means it employed.

ment of our former demands, but that we have the intention of raising some other questions the settlement of which we now esteem necessary in order to prevent the possibility of constant friction in future and in order to form a basis for permanent friendly relations. We have already informed the London Cabinet that the withdrawal of our troops would depend upon guarantees being received that the behaviour of the Persians towards us in future would be such as we are entitled to expect.[1]

London, by the way, shares our views as regards the desirability of securing Shuster's dismissal.

As concerns the other guarantees, we deem it expedient, apart from those already proposed, to open the question of the further development of the Persian army, *which, within our zone, would have to be subjected to our control.* In order, however, not to broach this delicate question at once and to its full extent and thereby to expose ourselves to the charge of having claimed the re-organisation of the entire Persian army, which, in case of need would, of course, have to be employed in Southern Persia, we prefer for the present to merely insist on the formation of a special division for Azerbeidjan, similar to the already existing cossack brigade, in connection with which we might point out that in this event our division could be withdrawn from Tabriz, which of course would be highly desirable to the Persian Government. Besides, we might touch upon the question of an extension of the concessions granted to the Julfa-Tabriz and the Enseli-Teheran Companies, with a view that both these Companies be granted the option of railway constructions within their respective sphere of influence.

(140) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov.* 8-21, 1911. *No.* 283.

The Persian Minister informed Grey yesterday that his Government was prepared to comply with the two demands made by the Russian Government, namely the offering of a suitable apology and the substitution of the military police by cossacks, provided the Russian troops would then be withdrawn. Grey replied that he approved of the attitude assumed by the Persian Government, but that he could not undertake to intervene on behalf of Persia

[1] As conquerors.

at St. Petersburg. Grey desires to know whether you wish to be officially informed of this step on the part of Persia, which of course would mean that a favourable reply would have to be given to the Persian proposal, and an end put to the whole incident.

(141) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 8-21, 1911. *No.* 284.

The statement alluded to in my telegram No. 283 was made to the Councillor of our Embassy. I myself am as yet unable to leave my house, and have not seen Grey. Nevertheless I should like to inform you of the following. The Persian step, though belated, nevertheless constitutes the initiative of which you spoke to Buchanan.

I myself have repeatedly pointed out to Grey and Nicolson the fact that the demands made by public opinion in Russia were constantly increasing. They have not denied this. Their point of view with regard to Shuster has already changed, but there exists a difference in the expression of public opinion in both countries. In England it may find expression in a vote of Parliament. Grey is sure of a majority. But if it were to suffer too large a diminution it might do great damage. The debate will take place next Monday. It will be more lively and prove longer than usual.

As regards the Persian questions, Grey will be assailed by the usual group, which possesses no great importance. *Yet it will cost Grey some trouble to justify our present military expedition, since no proof has been brought forward to show that we were wholly in the right in the incident which provoked military measures on our part.*[1] *I say this, because I do not believe that Grey has evidence to show that the Persians are wholly at fault.*

I myself do not possess the possibility of forcing him to accept our point of view. This circumstance will influence the debate and will also arouse those members of Parliament who, as a rule, do not trouble about Persian questions. My opinion is that this side of the question ought not to be lost sight of by the Russian Government, and this for political reasons of a general kind. *Grey will be attacked this time not only on account of the Persian question, but also on account of his attitude in the Moroccan affair and on account of*

[1] The Shoa-es-Saltaneh incident.

his too friendly attitude toward Italy in Tripoli.[1] *This may influence the vote. Should it be possible to dispose of the present incident, then Grey would be in a position to support us all the more energetically in the "Shuster" affair.*

(142) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov. 10-23, 1911. No. 286.*

I deem it necessary to give you an exact description of the situation here. *It is becoming more and more evident that next Monday, Grey will be attacked much more severely in the Persian question than could be at first foreseen. The attacks will be founded on the fact that the Persian Government had declared itself prepared to satisfy the terms of our Ultimatum.* **Grey has no other possibility than to completely justify our action. He has firmly decided to do so now,** *but he will be unable to declare himself as being in accord with us as to using a military occupation for the purpose of making fresh demands on Persia. The entire incident and the ultimatum are represented as being but a pretext advanced by us, and Grey will be charged with having permitted himself to be carried by us far beyond the bounds of our former declarations.*

In order to secure for ourselves the further support of Grey in the Shuster question, we must therefore afford him the possibility of justifying his policy before Parliament. I see no other way to accomplish this than by withdrawing our troops as soon as satisfaction has been given us; *of course, it would stand to reason that Persia should have to bear the responsibility if our troops were obliged to enter the country a second time. A speedy decision on the part of the Imperial Government will be all the more necessary since the debate next Monday will be of the greatest political significance for the entente.*

(143) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov. 10-23, 1911. No. 1861.*

We learn that Shuster has caused a pamphlet to be distributed among the population containing a violent attack upon us. **We are of the opinion that such an act on the part of a foreigner in Persian**

[1] The moderate element in Great Britain had recognized in Grey's attitude an imminent danger to the general peace.

service,—an action plainly directed against us—conjointly with the fact that the Persian Government has obliged us to resort to such a grave step as the sending of an armed force, *creates a situation of such a nature that we are obliged to make new demands,* and that until these are complied with, our troops cannot be recalled.

A statement of Shuster's mode of action will be submitted by me at the Ministerial Council, *and I assume that it will be decided to insist on the removal of this foreigner and his creatures, and that if these demands are not complied with, we shall be obliged to resort to forcible measures, without, of course, wishing thereby to separate ourselves from England.*

Our Minister at Teheran has not yet received any instruction in this respect. However, I consider it necessary that you speak to Grey about this at once.

(144) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov.* 10-23, 1911. *No.* 287.

Your telegram No. 1861 received.

In the reply given to Buchanan, *Grey repeats his resolve to support us if we should demand Shuster's dismissal.* He believes however, that this question must form the subject of new, energetic steps to be undertaken jointly by the two Legations when direct intercourse between our Minister and the Persian Government will again have been resumed. *He insists on the necessity of arresting the further advance of our troops, when the Persian Government will have complied with our first demands,* which we declared to be merely a support of the military demonstration.

(145) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 288.

I learn from a reliable source that there exists the serious possibility of an English ministerial crisis. It will probably not break out on Monday, but on the day when our troops enter Teheran. *This would entail Grey's resignation, who would be abandoned by several of his colleagues.*

As concerns the general trend of his policy, Grey is sure to have Parliament on his side, though not as regards the Persian question. What he stands in need of is a good argument based on a joint diplomatic action agreed upon between us and having clearly

defined aims. For this reason, Grey insists that the Shoa incident be dealt with independently of the Shuster affair, and that the latter shall not be made a pretext for our military expedition.[1]

(146) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 289.

I learn from the same source that the Persian Parliament and Shuster principally desire to break the Anglo-Russian understanding; for this reason they do not fear the Russian occupation of Teheran. As our entry into Teheran would in fact lead to the formation of a new government, which would have to be upheld by force of arms, the occupation of Persia would necessarily have to be a lasting one in order to maintain the conditions imposed by us. *Those English circles who are opposed to an Entente with us would join forces with the Persian Parliament, and this would lead very shortly to a rupture between ourselves and England.*

(147) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1911. *No.* 1877.

I telegraph to our Minister at Teheran:

"The British Ambassador informed me yesterday that Grey recognizes our right to put further demands to Persia[2] *and is of the opinion that several of these could be supported by the British Legation at Teheran.* He considers it desirable that we resume our diplomatic relations with Persia and hold back our troops in Resht.

"I told the Ambassador that in view of the fulfilment of our first demands by the Persians, you had already established relations with the Persian Foreign Minister and that the program of our new claims would be set up by the Ministerial Council. *You, together with the British Minister, would then be able to decide how far the British Legation could support us."*

"For your personal information: *We have by no means the intention of rendering the demands we shall lay before the Persians dependent on the approval of the British Minister.*[3] *As to your relations*

[1] Which leaves the impression that Sir Edward depended upon Russian action to remain in office.

[2] Though Grey had to fear trouble in Parliament, his own, and the invisible British government's, secret policy urged him to make further concessions to the Russians, who had tasted blood now.

[3] Double-crossing the British.

to the Persian Foreign Minister, these should, as we are about to formulate new demands, bear a purely business character and not imply the re-establishment of normal relations." [1]

(148) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1911. *No.* 1881.

The Ministerial Council based its findings on the consideration that our conflict with Persia has been called forth by incorrect actions on the part of the Persian Government and its agents in one special case, that therefore the new demands now formulated by us should not exceed the limits of the incident, and that this standpoint alone would be comprehensible to public opinion both in Russia and abroad.

Hence we do not intend to formulate claims irrelevant to the incident and therefore demand from the Persian Government:

1. The dismissal of Shuster and Lecoffre. The position of the other officials appointed by Shuster is embodied in point 2.

2. The assurance of the Persian Government that they will not appoint foreigners without having previously obtained the approval of the Russian and English Legations at Teheran.

3. *The costs of the expedition to be borne by the Persian Government. The sum total and method of payment will be decided upon later.*[2]

Whilst formulating these claims in writing, you will point in your note to the fact that we are forced to take this step *in order to obtain satisfaction for the military expedition forced upon us* [3] *and for the provocative actions committed by Shuster;* that we most earnestly desire to remove the causes that have hitherto led to conflicts in order to establish in future friendly relations between both Governments and to bring to a solution the many problems still pending.

Will you furthermore add that we expect the fulfilment of our claims within 48 *hours, during which period our troops would be held back in Resht.* Should, at the expiration of this period, no answer

[1] The "new demands" were of a sweeping nature.

[2] The best method for keeping a country in "peonage" with a view towards annexing it completely, because ultimately the invader could use the plea of national insolvency.

[3] An example of diplomatic "nerve."

have been received, or should such answer be of an unsatisfactory nature, then our troops would advance, *this inter alia naturally increasing the costs the Persian Government must repay.*

(149) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 16-29, 1911. *No.* 1901.

The Emperor has graciously confirmed the instructions forwarded to our Minister at Teheran. The latter has been instructed to hand the Note in question to the Persian Government.

(150) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov.* 18-*Dec.* 1, 1911. *No.* 302.

Grey sends me a short autographic letter, which I translate verbatim:

"I am very glad that Mr. Neratoff approves of my speech in Parliament.[1] *At the same time, I feel greatly alarmed by the further development of affairs in Persia. It appears that still further demands are in question. Should Russia be driven to use force in order to compel the acceptance of the three demands just presented—then this would be a great misfortune."*

(151) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 19-*Dec.* 2, 1911. *No.* 305.

I am reporting to you in a separate telegram my conversation today with Grey. At present I only wish to draw your special attention to the general inferences drawn by Grey.

Should the unity of our action in Persia come to an end, this would necessarily mean the disruption of the Entente. It would result,—in a far shorter period than generally believed,—*in a new orientation of English politics, with respect to which he made no further statements.*

This event would take place on the day on which he would have to declare in Parliament that a complete understanding no longer existed between England and Russia. In such a case he would tender his resignation, because, as he said, *it would not be in accordance with the interests of England were he to conduct a policy differing from that which he has upheld hitherto with all the means at his disposal, since he is a confirmed adherent of such a policy.*[2]

[1] The speech Sir Edward Grey himself had been afraid of.
[2] Which culminated in August 1914.

I believe this would portray the general feeling here, which is astounded at the rapidity of our decisions. This haste seems to preclude the possibility of a satisfactory solution and must lead to results to which one could not reconcile oneself here. I have never seen Grey so alarmed, and Cambon[1] *confirmed this impression to me.*

The Italian Ambassador asked me whether I thought Grey's resignation within possibility. Grey has only spoken to me, not even to Cambon.

(152) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 19-*Dec.* 2, 1911. *No.* 307.

Appended the translation of the summary of our conversation of to-day, as forwarded by Grey to the British Ambassador at Petersburg:

I spoke very seriously to Benckendorff to-day on the disquieting situation in Persia. I told him it was regrettable that the Russian ultimatum based itself on the question of the property of the Shoa-Es-Saltaneh. *This entire question was somewhat trivial and the Russian standpoint not wholly justifiable.*[2]

Furthermore, it was regrettable that after Russia had declared, —we have in fact received a formal assurance on this point from Kokowtzeff—that the Russian troops would be withdrawn as soon as the two demands referring to the incident be fulfilled, and after the British Minister[3] had prevailed on the Persian Government to accept these conditions, the Russian troops had not been withdrawn; on the contrary new demands had been formulated. It is true that the conditions were accepted by Persia with a few days' delay; nevertheless, *the circumstances under which Russia has acted have not been very happy.*

Three new demands have been presented. With regard to the two first I have no objections to raise.

Shuster did not follow the advice we gave him; he has brought us into a very difficult position, and we shall have to come to some agreement with the Persian Government on the question of the

[1] Paul, French ambassador at London.
[2] Merely a club to use on the Persians.
[3] Mr. Barclay, at Teheran, who was being double-crossed by Poklewski-Koziel.

foreign councillors in order to obviate again being placed in such a position. . . . . .

I regret that an indemnity has been demanded. English trade has suffered more than the Russian. I even believe that Russian trade in the North has gained as a consequence of the fact that English interests have suffered in the South. Money is necessary in order to re-establish order in the South, and the Russian demands for reimbursement would be regarded here as an injury to British interests. As the claim has been put forward, the Persian Government must agree to it, but I trust that payment will not be insisted on by Russia or will be made later in one or the other form by means of compensation.

I directed the Ambassador's most serious attention to the fact that the Russian troops should occupy Teheran only in case of the most extreme necessity and that no further more stringent claims should be presented without having first communicated with us. *I fear that the Petersburg Cabinet does not sufficiently take into account how unexpectedly the Persian Question, if it be not properly handled, may bring about a discussion of foreign policy as a whole. If demands be made which we cannot declare to be covered by the Anglo-Russian Convention, then the Persian Question would be lost sight of, and the question of foreign policy in general, Russia's as well as England's, would take its place. This would be regrettable and I am in the greatest anxiety.*[1]

If, on the other hand, the Russian Government will confine itself to its present demands and only proceed to Teheran in case of extreme necessity, then I hope to be able to overcome the present difficulties. We could perhaps form a Persian Government which would recognize the necessity of taking Russia's interest into account, instead of continually setting up opposition. We should be ready to support such a Government by the appointment of foreign advisers, *and the granting of a loan through Seligmann or some other bankers.*[2] The situation in Persia would be better than it has been hitherto.

But at the moment we still have great difficulties to overcome

[1] A damning *mea culpa*—Grey's confession that he was shaping Great Britain's policy in a manner contrary to what the public really wanted.

[2] The group favored by Mr. Shuster.

and *I am afraid the Russian Government does not consider how great are the stakes, and what great efforts we must make in order to avoid a separation in our policy.*

(153) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Nov.* 21-*Dec.* 4, 1911.

It is not easy to give you a complete picture of the situation in London. Sir Edward Grey's speech, in which he summarised with the lucidity peculiar to his eloquence the entire political situation resulting from the most recent events in Europe and in Persia, has made a great impression.

On the whole he met with the support of the Majority in the country *and the press takes his part almost unanimously. The leading newspapers contain not a single attack.*

Even during the sitting, however, it was impossible not to draw the conclusion that *the Minister's speech met with the unconditional approval only of the Conservative opposition, whilst the impression on the Ministerial benches was by no means uniform.*[1]

The Liberal Party has always shown the tendency to favour a rapprochement between England and Germany. In these circles it was considered that Sir Edward Grey's speech took their wishes too little into account, and an opposition against Grey is arising in these quarters, which is for the moment difficult to define, but which, nevertheless, exists in fact and is developing.

Grey's authority in Parliament is so great that this opposition would not constitute a danger did not the Persian question come into consideration.

The small fraction of the ultra-Radical party specially interested in Persian questions has been driven to extremes by Grey's statements on the Russian standpoint in Persia. This part of Grey's speech made in fact a deep impression.

It had indeed been assumed that he would place himself on our side, but it was not expected that he would attempt to explain the Russian standpoint.[2]

[1] Such *negativizing* grammar is characteristic of diplomatic correspondence, being a sort of "hog-Latin" of the craft.

[2] Anything to save the Entente.

Since this speech, Grey is being continually attacked by members of Parliament whose votes are essential to the present Cabinet. *This numerically weak, but most vigorous, opposition is reinforced by the more moderate and at the same time more dangerous attacks of such members of Parliament*—not all of whom belong to the Liberal Party—*who reproach him with taking up a too negative attitude towards Germany.*

In reality Grey, as he stated in his speech, is not against an improvement in the relations with Germany. This even appears desirable to him. *But he does not wish to sacrifice to it the two Ententes, and he is convinced that a serious rapprochement with Germany is only possible on this condition.*[1]

As he told me in confidence yesterday, he stands and falls with this policy. For this reason, he said, Russia's policy towards England must be quite transparent. He added that should our understanding survive the present crisis, England would regard it as a triumph of our united Persian policy and this would lead to the strengthening of the relations between the two countries.

But to silence the opposition it does not suffice to be able to give an explanation of Russian policy from day to day.

In the course of our conversation we referred to numerous details, and Grey's confidential report to Buchanan contains a short survey of the entire political situation.

The idea that the Russian Government desires to violate the integrity or the independence of Persia—*however little real importance these terms may possess so far as the two Powers are concerned*[2]—is not credited by Sir Edward Grey. Yet this is assuredly the point from which the opposition starts.

Grey has repeatedly pointed to the fact that the continuous increasing of our demands tends to strengthen the opposition. *He is fully aware that his resignation would undoubtedly lead to a thorough change of English policy.*[3]

In order to be able to maintain the Entente with England we, in my opinion, must inform the British Government that we shall

[1] Showing Grey's insincerity, since he knew all too well that this was quite impossible.
[2] A frank admission.
[3] An understanding with Germany, as shown by these documents.

at Teheran strictly adhere to the agreements contained in the Anglo-Russian Convention and that the integrity and independence of Persia, *as understood by the two Powers,*[1] will not be violated. Otherwise it is certain that Grey will have to resign, whatever he may say or do.

If we were only to lose in him a statesman of great merit, then this consideration would perhaps have to be subordinated to the interests of Russia, and could not influence the decisions of the Imperial Government. *But I think I must once more reiterate that Grey's retirement would involve the complete re-orientation of English policy.*

No doubts can be harboured as to what would then follow. *Just at this moment a gradual rapprochement with Germany is in preparation. This may be but a partial one at the beginning, but later on it is sure to become general and to exclude everything else. At least, this is my firm conviction, in spite of all signs to the contrary, since it is undeniable that bitter feeling still prevails in London as well as at Berlin. I believe, however, that once Russia is separated from England, the present state of affairs will soon undergo a change. It is obvious that, to all those desiring a rupture of the Anglo-Russian Entente, the whole Shuster affair presents a very efficacious lever.*

(154) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 22-*Dec.* 5, 1911. *No.* 313.

Nicolson informs me that Major Stokes will obey repeated orders and return to England.[2] *He will leave Persia in ten days.*

(155) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov.* 17-30, 1911. *No.* 1173.

After long secret conferences with the Ministerial Council, the Persian Parliament voted in open session on the answer to our ultimatum and decided by an overwhelming Majority to reject our demands.[3]

[1] The Persian and Entente views on integrity and independence did not coincide, however.
[2] The price paid to Russia by Grey.
[3] Which included the demand for Mr. Shuster's dismissal from the Persian service.

(156) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov.* 18-*Dec.* 1, 1911. *No.* 1923.

We have instructed our Minister at Teheran to propose to the commander of our Expeditionary Corps to advance in the direction of Kaswin, calculating to leave Resht not earlier than to-morrow afternoon, as I promised Buchanan.[1]

(157) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov.* 20-*Dec.* 3, 1911. *No.* 1938.

The British Minister has informed the Persians, in the name of the London Cabinet, that both Governments are debating on the situation at Teheran, *but that no hopes should be entertained at Teheran of any one of the Russian demands being withdrawn. The non-fulfilment of the Russian ultimatum would have as a consequence the advance of our troops.* **This statement has re-established in the eyes of the Persians and the English here the solidarity of both Governments as to which divers doubts were raised here after our last ultimatum.**

(158) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov.* 21-*Dec.* 4, 1911. *No.* 1951.

We can not quite understand for what reason Grey is alarmed by our actions in Persia, as these are not contrary to our agreement with England. We have no intention of insisting on the immediate indemnification of our expenses. We have pointed out that this question will form the subject of further discussions.

Our troops will probably be concentrated at Kaswin on November 30, and the Commanding General will await further instructions there. *At the same time I pointed out to Buchanan that the troops' remaining in Kaswin would depend on the further development of affairs; an acceleration of our entry into Teheran may possibly become necessary.*

As for new demands, should such be rendered imperative in consequence of, for instance, armed resistance and bloodshed, then they will refer solely to specifically Russian interests in our zone, i. e., railways

[1] Despite the pleas of Sir Edward Grey, who hated Germany more than normally he despised Russia.

in Northern Persia, the organisation of an armed troop in Tabriz under Russian control, to allow us to recall our military there, etc. etc.

It is understood that we shall present no claims of a general political nature without a previous understanding with England.

(159) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Nov.* 25-Dec. 8, 1911. *No.* 315.

The British Minister telegraphs from Teheran that he feels justified in assuming that the Persian Government will fulfil our demands. The discussion between the Persian Minister here and Grey discloses that the demand, that the nomination of foreign councilors be subjected to the previous approval of Russia and England, arouses the strongest opposition. Grey thinks a form which is less wounding to Persian self-respect should be found for this demand. *This concession, naturally, could only be made after the fulfilment of the demand of Shuster's withdrawal.*

(160) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov.* 27-*Dec.* 10, 1911. *No.* 2009.

Your telegram 315 received.

We have already forwarded instructions to our Minister to find for Point 2 of our ultimatum a form less wounding to the self-respect of the Persians and to replace the words "without the previous approval of the two Legations" by "without a previous understanding with the two Legations."

(161) *Sazonoff, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Dec.* 9-22, 1911. *No.* 2109.

I telegraphed to our Minister at Teheran:

The Persian Chargé d'Affaires has to-day informed us that his Government accepts all our demands, Point 2 being replied to in the wording permitted by us.

The Persian Representative at the same time expressed the hope that our troops would be immediately withdrawn from Kaswin. We informed him that we gladly acknowledge his statement and that our troops will be withdrawn, *but that we hope that our demands will be fulfilled de facto by that time and Shuster removed.* At the same time, we expected that the resumption of friendly

relations between Russia and Persia would lead to the readiness of the Persian Government to regulate on a diplomatic basis a whole series of questions which had met with no solution in the course of the last few years and which have no connection whatsoever with the incident just brought to a happy conclusion.

The Chargé d'Affaires then informed us that encounters with our troops had taken place in Resht and Tabriz, the blame resting with the Russians. We answered him *that according to our information the Persians had attacked, and that we were not as yet in possession of any information, but that in any event the future action of our troops in both these towns was not dependent on the orders of the central institutions but on those of the military officers in command.*[1]

(162) *The Russian Viceroy in the Caucasus to the Foreign Minister. Telegram, Dec.* 10-23, 1911. *No.* 7637.

Up to the present day I have issued no orders regarding the actions of our troops in Persia. The commanding officers of the separate units have acted in agreement with our Consuls. I consider however that such a state of affairs, under the present acute conditions, is improper and cannot be maintained. *The commanding officers must be given instructions exactly circumscribing the object of the expedition and granting them entire freedom of action in its attainment. In my opinion these instructions should be: Advance on Teheran without halt, occupy the town and place yourself at the disposal of our minister there. March the entire route to Teheran and leave the necessary relays at Enseli, Resht and Kaswin; take energetic measures against refusal to work, boycott and robbery; the Fidais must be taken prisoners; should they resist, they must be destroyed.*[2] *The opinions of the Consuls can be taken into consideration, but the commanding officers must act independently and only take into account the orders of the minister.*[3]

The lengthy stay of our troops at Kaswin has proved to the revolutionaries that a certain foreign influence is restricting our freedom of

[1] Which means that these officers had *carte blanche,* a state of affairs that could only lead to complication and provocation.
[2] An example of what the Persians had opposed in a feeble way.
[3] At Teheran.

action. This has heightened the courage of the Fidais and led to fights with our detachment in Tabriz.

(163) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 7785.

The attacks on our troops and the mutilation of our wounded[1] *rendered energetic reprisals necessary, and I consider it desirable to instruct General Woropanoff to blow up the Tabriz Citadel and to establish military tribunals to mete out justice*[2] *to all the originators of the attack as well as to those who mutilated our wounded, and finally to all such Russian subjects as fled to Persia and participated in the attacks on our troops. The verdicts must be carried out at once. Furthermore, a considerable compensation must be demanded from the population of Tabriz for the families of the killed and wounded.*[3] *Similar measures are to be taken in Enseli and Resht, and in other Persian towns in which encounters have taken place.*

(164) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 7786.

All culprits should be dealt with by the court martials on the spot in Persia and not sent to Russia to the Caucasian prisons, as these are overcrowded; the trials would be long drawn out and the punishment would not be severe enough in proportion to the transgressions.[4]

(165) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 19, 1911-*Jan.* 1, 1912. *No.* 337.

Mallet,[5] *and various editors of the leading English papers favouring the Entente, such as the "Times," have told me that they regret suppression of the disturbances in Persia. This is all the more deplorable as it was a question of the peaceful local population which on the whole had behaved with civility towards Russia.*

I told Mallet in reply, I was convinced that the military commanders had orders to avoid every unjust measure, and that the influence of the viceroy[6] *and the consuls was exercised to the same effect; that*

[1] A charge incident to all campaigns of that nature.
[2] The firing squad.
[3] Who died for the cause of imperialism—Russia's "historic mission."
[4] Meaning death by court martial.
[5] Attached to British foreign office, and later British ambassador to Turkey.
[6] The quality of whose mercy we see described in his own telegrams.

the government could not be held responsible for the articles of the "Novoe Vremia," [1] *but that I was perfectly willing to place these considerations before you in order to avoid a press campaign.*

(166) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 21, 1911-*Jan.* 3, 1912. *No.* 341.

Mallet has shown me in confidence a telegram from the British Minister at Teheran on the execution of the Sikat Ul Islam. *Barclay expresses his dismay. This priest was the object of special veneration in a great part of Persia. His execution was nothing less than a catastrophe and the consequences could not be foreseen.* **He believes the fall of the Persian Cabinet possible. The news has been published here to-day.**

The "Times" devotes a leader to the situation at Tabriz. *On the whole, the article is favourable to us, with the exception of this execution. I fear a very unfavourable impression on public opinion here. A revival of religious fanaticism is feared above everything.*[2]

(167) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 23, 1911-*Jan.* 5, 1912. *No.* 343.

The execution of the Sikat must be regarded from two viewpoints.[3]

First, the choice of the day. *The date chosen seems to me to have been a regrettable error on the part of our officials.* **The measures we took had the sole purpose of punishing in an exemplary manner the originators of the disturbances. Should priests be among these, then** *a religious fête-day should obviously not have been chosen for their punishment, in order clearly to show that such punishment has nothing to do with religious sentiment and the Islamic religion.* **By carrying out this execution on the very day of religious prayers, the entire affair has taken an anti-Islamic character.**

The second point to be considered is that the impression called forth by the execution of the Sikat is so extraordinarily strong that the Russian Government should put a stop to all further executions.

[1] Semi-official newspaper of the Russian government; organ of the Grand-Ducal war clique and Sazonoff.

[2] Objection to the treatment of the Persians by the Moslems within and without the British empire.

[3] From the angle of scientific hypothesis and Russian imperialism.

(168) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 24, 1911-*Jan.* 6, 1912. *No.* 346.

. . . . The events cannot but create the impression that our entire policy in Persia seems to fluctuate between two poles: The one, *the secret current,* always appears to carry away with it the other, which forms our official program. *This opinion gains strength continuously. It is extraordinarily harmful to the authority and weight of the official statements made by our Government.*[1] *I should reproach myself were I not to attract your attention to this danger.*

(169) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Teheran. Telegram, Jan.* 5-18, 1912. *No.* 38.

We learn with pleasure that the Persian Government intends taking energetic measures against the Democrats. We are convinced that order can be re-established throughout the country only by such means. Pray inform the Cabinet that our full support could be relied on in this question.[2]

(170) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Extract from a Personal Letter, Jan.* 15-28, 1912.

. . . . Up to the present I have made no use of the final sentence in your telegram No. 13: "We are now making a new decisive effort to establish friendly relations with the Persian Government, and should it again prove itself unworthy of our confidence, then we shall have to enter into a serious exchange of opinions with the London Cabinet on the existing situation."

Such deductions seem to me premature. If I were to lay them before the London Cabinet, the latter might assume that we ourselves had no confidence in the success of our present endeavours *and were already thinking more of their eventual results. What would follow could only be a more or less open partition of Persia.*[3] *This would mean the collapse of Grey's policy, in the name of which he has hitherto silenced all opponents of the Entente. It is obvious that*

[1] The acts of Russia in Persia were revealing what the words of Count Benckendorff endeavored to hide.
[2] The Persian Democrats insisted upon the country's autonomy.
[3] The complete partition Sazonoff had in view.

we must attempt to create a new situation at Teheran, but I would rather not speak of a decisive attempt—this sounds too much like a final attempt.

We have already attained concrete results:

Shuster has vanished and the Persian Government is dissolved.

The new spirit needs time to take root.

It will not be difficult for me to impress Grey in view of our conciliatory attitude: the abdication of Muhamed Ali and the Persian Loan.

What I wish to avoid is rendering our Entente with England, our relations to this country, dependent on the attitude of the Persian Government and, by so doing, presenting, as I may say, the Persian Government with the key to Anglo-Russian relations. The belief that a joint discussion of an absolutely new program could lead to any result appears to me illusory. *Neither Grey nor the present Government could permit the partition or a joint protectorate over Persia.*[1] Not only the Liberal but the whole Conservative Party in England as well would oppose this.

I believe that the Conservatives, even if they could, will avoid bringing about the fall of the Government on a question of foreign policy.

They prefer coming into office without having bound themselves in any one question. Nor do I believe that Grey will have to retire, unless, of course, some unforeseen event should take place. But on the other hand, a foreign Minister cannot remain at his post for any length of time after being attacked by his own party and supported only by the opposition. *This would necessarily be the case once we declare that we must take further measures in Persia.*

We must not conceal from ourselves the fact that the opposition is growing in England.[2] *The Persian question looms largest in the public eye; but it is not the only one. In reality, the relations to Germany are most prominent; they are deemed too strained and Grey is held responsible,*—in my opinion wrongly so. *Bonar Law only devoted a few words to foreign policy in his speech. He con-*

[1] Desired by Russia.

[2] Opposition to Grey's secret understanding with Russia, the existence of which could not longer be denied.

cluded however, with the statement that Grey's policy logically must lead to the result that the whole ill-will in Germany recoiled upon England. This is the principal theme of the opposition, however much it may be denied.

If the attacks of the Persian Committee alone came into question, the matter would not be dangerous. *But Grey is being reproached with having settled the affairs for a none-too-grateful France and with now defending the interests of Italy and Russia.*

France and Italy now belong to past history, but the Persian problem is of the present and the opposition will endeavour to prove that Grey is neglecting England's interests in South Persia and India in favour of Russia.[1]

Nicolson told me the British Viceroy in India had written to say that events in Persia had echoed far and wide among the Mohammedan population.

The German Ambassador has just been to see me.

"Public opinion in England begins to veer round to us again" he told me.

This is true. One should only try to prevent it sheering away from us in a like measure. And yet this is the case. *This development can still be stopped, but it can also make very rapid progress, as Grey himself told me some weeks ago. Grey was very grave on that occasion.*

I am loathe again and again to play the part of Cassandra, but whose duty but mine would it be to write and inform you of what I foresee and what I observe?

The relations between the two Governments are not clouded, as no misunderstanding exists. *The British Government knows the state of affairs. But this is not the case with the relations to each other of public opinion in the two countries. And yet these will decide the further development of affairs.*

[1] To realize his pet scheme: The destruction of Germany, as is shown by the documents.

IV

NORTH AFRICA, ITALY AND THE ENTENTE

(June 1909—July 1914)

In the summer of 1909, the political constellation in Europe was the following: France and Russia were allies; France and Great Britain were linked together in the *entente cordiale;* France had an agreement with Italy which enabled both countries to desist from concentrating troops on their mutual frontier; Russia was on the best terms with Great Britain, and Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the Triple Alliance, a combination which had weathered many a storm—solely because Germany remained loyal to Austria-Hungary under all circumstances, and was able to keep up appearances well with Italy.

Russia was working feverishly in the Balkans to get the Slav states to agree a little oftener with one another, and form of them a combination that would foster the interests of Pan-Slavism, to which policy both, Iswolsky and Sazonoff, were committed. Since the aspirations of the Balkan states could only be realized by driving the Turk still more eastward, the Ottoman government had to fear that before long it would have another war on its hands. Thus it came that at times it would listen even to Russian advances, though fully conscious of the fact that there was no friendship behind them. Imperial Russia, while doing her best to weld together into a homogeneous mass the Slavs of the Balkans, was not minded to have all of Turkey-in-Europe fall into their hands. Thrace at least was to be Russian, ultimately, by virtue of its being the immediate neighborhood of Constantinople, which city, known affectionately to all Russians as *Czarigrad*—emperor

city—was to be the real capital of Russia in the future. From the cupola of the Hagia Sofia in Stamboul was to shine resplendent once more the Greek cross. The Turk was to be driven unto the Anatolian high-plateau, and Old Byzantium and her waterways, the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, were to be Russian. Such was the "historic mission" of Russia of which we hear so much in the documents.

Austria-Hungary had long been a thorn in the side of Russia. During the Bosnian crisis, Germany had stood by her ally, while Italy had been lukewarm, though not yet ready to violate the contract she had signed in the treaty of the Triple Alliance. By the terms of that treaty, Italy was obliged to come to the assistance of Germany and Austria-Hungary in case the *casus foederis* ensued, while Germany and Austria-Hungary were obliged to do as much for the Italians.

There had been much enmity between the French and Italians. Italy had not yet forgotten the conduct of the French zouaves. But M. Barrère, the French ambassador to Rome, was an able man. The result was that, in 1902, an agreement was reached between the governments of France and Italy, which resulted in a decided lessening of the tension and made the Italo-French border less of a permanent military camp.

Russia also wanted to contribute her share toward weaning Italy away from Germany and Austria-Hungary, and in the summer of 1909, the King of Italy and Czar Nicholas came together and made what has become known as the Agreement of Racconigi, according to whose terms, so far as known, both governments guaranteed to one another the *status quo* in the Balkans.

It was shown later that Italy had a similar agreement with the Austro-Hungarian government, which was quite in keeping with the notions of international honesty the Italians had and as this honesty is depicted in the diplomatic correspondence here submitted.

News that Russia and Italy had reached an agreement caused considerable disquietude in Berlin and Vienna, and renewed in Germany the agitation for a new foreign policy, in which Austria-Hungary would not figure as the principal ally. It was felt that Italy had some just grievances against the Vienna gov-

ernment and that for this reason it was expecting too much of Italy to be a loyal member of the Triple Alliance. Moreover, it was evident that, militarily, Austria-Hungary was more of a liability to Germany than an asset. While her own Slav elements could not be relied upon, Austria-Hungary seemed bent upon incorporating other Slavs in the Balkans, weakening herself internally thereby, and drawing upon herself the illwill of the Russians. The other side argued that Austria-Hungary was the only available ally, and was still better than Italy because that country, having a long and vulnerable coastline, could be reduced to impotency by the fleets of Great Britain and France in little time. Besides, Austria-Hungary was stronger in the economic sense, and the ties of race between the Germans and the German-Austrians also contributed to continuing the alliance. The policy of Prince Bismarck and Emperor William I, which was for an entente with Russia, had been ignored by Emperor William II, and could not be upheld anyway so long as Russian Pan-Slavism and Austro-Hungarian imperialism remained in hostile contact. Then, too, there was no other state to select for an ally, so long as Alsace-Lorraine remained an issue with the French, and German foreign trade continued to be an irritant to Great Britain.

The Agreement of Racconigi was regarded throughout Europe as an event of the greatest significance. It signalled a new era in international relations.

Naturally, Italy wanted a compensation for entering upon a common policy with Russia in the Balkans. That common policy was to prevent further growth of Austria-Hungary in the peninsula. But that was barely a consideration for the Entente as a whole. The documents show that the Agreement of Racconigi was the first decisive step to get Italy into the camp of the French, Russians and British. The intention was to make Italy more than a mere "dead weight" in the Triple Alliance, as she had been since 1902, if not before.

Though Signor Tittoni, then Italian minister of foreign affairs, was smitten by pangs of conscience shortly afterwards, he got used to the idea of Italy being a potential ally of Russia, France and Great Britain. Moreover, there was a compensation that was worth while. Italy was promised non-interference in her plan

to take the last of the Ottoman territories in North Africa as her own.

It was a season for such things. Out in the Far East, Russia and Japan were dividing Manchuria and Mongolia among themselves with the consent of Great Britain and France, and later the United States. It was to be China's turn as soon as the necessary political and military preliminaries had been achieved. Great Britain was about to extend her Indian empire into Tibet. Persia had been divided into "zones of influence" by Russia and Great Britain, and France, after ceding to Great Britain the last of her rights in Egypt, had been given a free hand in Morocco to the detriment of Spain, Germany and the smaller Powers. Already Sazonoff had decided that the Slavs of the Balkans were to take from the Turk all they could, bringing their booty as heirloom to the Great Pan-Slav realm that was to be fashioned, and, as he viewed it, the achievement of Russia's "historic mission" in Thrace, Constantinople and Asia Minor was not far off. To Italy, then, was given what could be spared, and that was a narrow fringe of habitable land along the Mediterranean.

On September 27, 1911, Italy was ready to gather the price, and though the Ottoman government did everything possible to avert war, it did not succeed, because the cards were once more stacked against the Turk.

There was intermittent warfare for a year almost, and then both belligerents desisted because the money gave out, and the Balkan League was ready to descend upon the Turks, while Italy had been made to realize that, while there was no objection to her taking Cyrenaica and Lybia, there was an end to Entente munificence in regard to the Turkish islands in the Mediterranean which Italy proposed occupying. The Entente did not intend having Italy become a first class power in the Mediterranean, by holding naval bases in the eastern reaches of that sea.

Meanwhile, the Entente had gained what it wanted. On March 25th, 1912 already, the Russian ambassador at Rome was able to report to Sazonoff that:

"Owing to the Re-Insurance Treaties, which are known to you, in the event of a conflict between the hostile camps of Europe, Germany can no longer absolutely count on Italy."

Tittoni, who was later ambassador to France, was not always sure that Italy had taken the proper course, and caused both, the Italian and French governments, many an uneasy moment. He resented that, despite the good turns Italy had done France, the standing of the Italians with the French was no better than it had been in the past, insisting that his country should be looked upon as an equal among nations.

There is no doubt that Italy owed her rise to the Triple Alliance, and the saner of her statesmen were not always sure of the ground upon which the politicians and diplomatists had set the country's feet.

The chapter on this subject may be looked upon as the most complete illustration of what modern diplomacy is. It removes all doubt as to what the intentions of France, Russia and Great Britain were, and throws a strong light on the methods adopted for reaching the objective. International machination is pictured in it so lucidly and completely as to make the least exercise of one's imagination superfluous.

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(171) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Iswolsky. Letter, June* 9-22, 1909.

Since the departure of our ambassador, I have not had the opportunity of speaking to Tittoni,[1] who has been engaged the entire time in Parliament. On the other hand, I have talked with Bollati [2] on various subjects, in regard to which I feel obliged to make a report, even though the events discussed belong already to the past.

First of all, I must convey to you Tittoni's regret at not having seen you in Venice whither he assumed you were coming after your stay in Munich. *As he was in Milan, he made all his plans to meet you quite privately in Venice, as otherwise the press would have made use of your meeting for making all sorts of comments.*

I received no further indication as to what he wished to discuss with you. I believe, however, that I am not mistaken in thinking it

[1] Italian minister of foreign affairs.
[2] Italian under-secretary for foreign affairs.

related to his negotiations with Aehrenthal in regard to Article 29 [1] of the Berlin Treaty and your assurances in this connection.

I do not doubt but that Tittoni would have given you exact details concerning the last meeting of the King of Italy and the King of England at Bajä. As Sir Rennel Rodd [2] himself told me, the agreement was that no political questions should be discussed during the course of this meeting. *King Edward decided otherwise and had two conversations, one with King Victor Emanuel, the other with Tittoni, discussing with both of them the same subject, namely, the balance of power in the Adriatic and the attitude of Italy in the event of an Anglo-German war.*[3]

The British Ambassador assured me that neither the king nor Tittoni had given any answer to the questions put to them, *but that the conversation had evidently made a deep impression on them both. King Victor Emanuel made no secret of this fact, when he spoke to Sir Rennel in the Quirinal eight days after the departure of King Edward. Sir Rennel, for his part, was astonished that the King had not taken advantage of this opportunity in order to express such doubts as might have arisen in his mind during the meeting at Bajä and to enter into an exchange of views. As to the impression made upon Tittoni, the French Ambassador told me yesterday, the minister seemed to be, above all, astonished that King Edward had spoken of the probability of an approaching conflict between England and Germany, a probability which Tittoni hitherto had regarded as a purely theoretical question, and which now suddenly loomed up before him as an immediate danger. Towards Barrère,*[4] *he had refrained from all comment, giving him, however, to understand how difficult it would be for Italy to participate in a conflict, as she would not be able to remain a mere onlooker.*

If Tittoni entertained such doubts a month ago, they seem to be renewed now upon receipt of the news that the Czar of Russia and the German Emperor will meet in Finnish waters, for in the absence of Barrère he asked Legrand, whether the Paris Cabinet did not fear that Russian policy was entering upon a new course. Legrand replied with a mere negative.

[1] Aftermath of the Bosnian Crisis 1908-9.
[2] British ambassador at Rome.
[3] Pet enterprise of King Edward VII.
[4] French ambassador at Rome.

I did not speak to Bollati of all these details. We concluded our conversation with such words as these:

"We are in constant contact with the English, mainly in respect to the negotiations regarding Article 29 of the Berlin Treaty; this is the situation at present, and after Bajä we shall talk to you as before." [1] This statement differs decidedly from Sir Rennel Rodd's description; still, I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the latter.

(172) *The Russian Ambassador at Vienna to Iswolsky. Report, Oct.* 14-27, 1909.

The meeting between our Czar and the King of Italy,[2] *and the fact that His Majesty took a roundabout way in order to avoid Austro-Hungarian territory,* has aroused much ill-feeling here. The Government, however, actuated by a spirit of *amour propre,* has not given utterance to its disappointment, and has used its influence with the press, which has shown more moderation and tact respecting the meeting of the Monarchs than might have been expected. Notwithstanding, the feeling of wounded pride is clearly perceptible in conversation with political leaders and representatives of the press.

The semi-official organs, with the "Fremdenblatt" at their head, declare that the incident has no political significance; others, more or less under the control of the Foreign Office, emphasize, in fact, that the incident is a favorable one, as a rapprochement between Russia and Italy would mean a diplomatic guarantee for the preservation of the general peace.

(173) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London to Iswolsky. Very Confidential Letter, Oct.* 14-27, 1909.

The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs [3] *has spoken to me of the intense satisfaction with which the news of our Czar's visit in Racconigi was received by the government and public opinion in England. This trip was most opportune and of great importance not only to Russia, England and France, but even more so to Italy, as the relations be-*

[1] Enigma.
[2] At Racconigi, where a secret understanding concerning the Balkans was reached.
[3] Sir Charles Hardinge.

tween Italy and Austria were becoming visibly strained. An additional proof of the clouding of relations between Austria and Italy is believed here to be manifested by the recall of the Austrian Ambassador, Count Lützow,[1] *whose political views are supposedly not in accord with those of Aehrenthal.*

Details in regard to the meeting in Racconigi are of course not yet known in London, but judging from the enthusiastic press reports, it is believed that a favorable result can be reckoned with.

Hardinge has stated to me that he shares the opinion of a part of the European press regarding the strange position which Italy has assumed in respect to the grouping of the Powers. Chiefly in the event of complications in the Near East, Italy would either have to be untrue to her ally or act counter to her own national interests. These words confirm the deep impression made on government circles here by the meeting at Racconigi; they seem to incline to the belief that Italy in the future will stand closer to the Entente than to the Triple Alliance.

(174) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Iswolsky. Report, Oct.* 16-29, 1909.

The judgment of the Russian and Italian press, interpreting the meeting at Racconigi to be a manifestation directed against the Triple Alliance, especially against Austria, have not passed unnoticed here. Notwithstanding, both Government and official press have up to now maintained a quiet and moderate tone.

Baron Schön[2] declares that the Berlin Cabinet feels no uneasiness in regard to the Russo-Italian friendship. The speeches as well as all the details of the visit at Racconigi reinforce this view of his. The "Cologne Gazette" expressed itself in like fashion, showing however some slight irritation at the Italian press, which, it declares, has written much about this visit that might have better been left unwritten.

But in spite of all these assurances a certain amount of uneasiness seems to prevail in government circles in Germany, as it is not known how these new Russo-Italian relations will react on Italy's position in the Triple Alliance and on the general course of European policies.

[1] From Rome.
[2] German secretary of state of foreign affairs.

(175) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Oct.* 17-30, 1909. *No.* 213.

The Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Milovanovitch, has just called on me. *He counts with certainty on the visit at Racconigi having favorable results for Serbia.*[1] *He obtained the same impression from his conversations with Grey and Hardinge, of which I wrote you in my letter of October* 14, *respecting the future attitude of Italy towards the Triple Alliance. Milovanovitch doubts whether Austria-Hungary will resolve on any new step to diminish the significance of the meeting at Racconigi, as Grey seems to fear.*

(176) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 30-*Nov.* 12, 1909. *No.* 218.

In the Foreign Office here reports have been received from Rome, according to which Tittoni intends to propose to all the great Powers that they sign a formal declaration regarding the preservation of the status quo in the Balkans.[2] *In reply to Hardinge's question as to whether such a project had been discussed at Racconigi, I stated on the strength of your letter of October* 22 *to our Ambassador at Berlin that, undoubtedly, the principle mentioned had been agreed upon, but that I had heard nothing of the project of a declaration. Hardinge added that such a step would be regarded here as untimely, useless and even provocative.*

(177) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in London. Telegram, Nov.* 1-14, 1909. *No.* 1946.

Your telegram received. *You may state categorically that there was no suggestion of such a step at Racconigi; we consider it, for our part, as thoroughly inopportune.*[3]

(178) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Berlin. Confidential Letter, Oct.* 22-*Nov.* 4, 1909.

The meeting of our Czar with the King of Italy at Racconigi has given rise to various comments, some of which are calculated to misrepresent the character of the meeting and to arouse suspicion concern-

[1] A correct conclusion, as shown by the document.
[2] Tittoni's conscience was not easy.
[3] But Iswolsky's conscience was easy.

ing our policy. I think it useful to inform you of certain details which you may make use of in your conversations with Herr von Bethmann Hollweg and Baron Schön.

It is well known that His Majesty's journey was in answer to the visit made by the King of Italy to Peterhof in 1902. *Nevertheless, it is clear that the meeting at Racconigi was not merely a question of etiquette, and that under present circumstances it becomes tinged with an important political significance. This significance is already to be seen in the exchange of speeches and the official declaration which, with the consent of Tittoni, I have had published in the press.* The Czar of Russia and the King of Italy not only solemnly declared their personal friendship, but also the complete harmony of views and interests existing between their respective governments. The declaration in the press completes and supplements this idea *by stating that Russia and Italy have the same object in view in their Balkan policy, namely, the strengthening of the political status quo of Turkey*[1] *as well as the independence and the normal and peaceful development of the Balkan States.*

Serious and moderate European press organs have not hesitated to admit that the Russo-Italian rapprochement, according to this presentation, can in no way be disquieting, and must be regarded as a further guarantee for the preservation of peace. *Unfortunately, a few less moderate papers attempt to see in this rapprochement something directed against Austria-Hungary or even against the entire Triple Alliance.*[2]

Such an interpretation must be categorically rejected.

The idea of a community of views and interests between Russia and Italy in Balkan questions is not new. Two years ago, Tittoni and I in political speeches which we delivered, gave expression to this idea and nobody at the time thought of considering such a viewpoint as incompatible with the obligations Russia and Italy owe to their Allies. In fact, there could be but one single instance where Russia and Italy might find themselves at variance with a third Power: namely, in the event that endeavours should be made to oppose them in the two principles they have jointly

[1] Another "significant" phrase since Italy upset that *status quo* by her descent upon Tripoli, which was her price for joining Russia in the Balkans.

[2] As it was.

agreed upon—*the strengthening of the present political status quo in Turkey and the normal and peaceful development of the Balkan States.*

These two points, however, constitute an important part of the common political programme of all the Powers, and we are convinced that Germany and Austria are prepared, like Russia and Italy, to support this principle with every means in their power.

In fact, in contending that our rapprochement with Italy is not directed in any way against Germany or Austria-Hungary, I am not fully expressing the thoughts of the St. Petersburg Cabinet. I go further and unhesitatingly declare that, in our opinion, every attempt to overthrow the system of alliances on which the peace of Europe has been based for so long, must mean a grave menace to this peace.

. . . . . This conviction I have expressed to the German Imperial Chancellor and to Baron Schön, and I cannot emphasize this point too strongly. But I am also thoroughly convinced that the system in question should not prevent us from maintaining the most friendly relations with the Powers of the Triple Alliance. We confirm with satisfaction that the two meetings between our Czar and Emperor William assisted in removing all misunderstandings existing between us and Germany. Unfortunately, we are not able to say the same of Austria-Hungary, for it is not we who have disturbed these relations. If we take advantage of the opportunity offered us today to draw nearer to Italy, we feel that, in doing so, we are assisting the cause of peace and general harmony, and we are of the firm conviction that this will also be the view of the Berlin Cabinet.

I should like to add a few words: The route of the Czar's journey has been much discussed. It is true, his Majesty wished to avoid Austro-Hungarian territory. *You will not be surprised at this, when I tell you that up to now Austria-Hungary has made no attempt to diminish the impression created by her policy towards Russia during the last crisis.*

(179) *Iswolsky to the Representatives of Russia at Sofia, Belgrade and Cettinje. Instructions, Oct. 22-Nov. 4, 1909.*

The meeting of our Czar with the King of Italy has attracted the attention of the political world, as it is regarded as a signifi-

cant incident, especially in view of the relations existing between the Governments of Europe as determined by their policy of the last few years.

As there is no doubt that the Balkan States will regard this meeting as an important factor in the further development of Balkan policy, I consider it necessary to send you a few explanatory instructions.

The Czar deemed it necessary last autumn to carry out his intention of paying a visit to the Italian court *in return for the visit made by King Victor Emanuel several years ago*[1] *at Peterhof.* The bonds of sincere friendship uniting the two courts have found clear expression in the reception accorded our Czar. From the text of the speeches exchanged at Racconigi you will see that stress was laid by the king of Italy as well as the czar on the ever-increasing close relations between the two countries, whilst at the same time attention was drawn to the mutual endeavours to preserve the general peace.

This fundamental idea, when applied to Balkan questions, will serve you as a guide in all your conversations with local political leaders. In this connection you will bear in mind that at the conferences at Racconigi on Balkan questions, Russia, as well as Italy, *emphatically declared that they regarded it as absolutely necessary to protect the present status quo in Turkey*[2] *and the independence and the normal, peaceful development of the other Balkan States.* Both Governments will devote all their efforts to the attainment of this object.

You are, no doubt fully conscious of the importance of this declaration. The Balkan States must be convinced that a violation of the present political situation in the Balkans will meet with neither the consent nor the support of Russia or Italy, but that at the same time the policy of the two Great Powers is directed towards safeguarding the future destiny of the Balkan States and their independent existence. This naturally can only strengthen the Balkan States in the consciousness that they are secure against

[1] Usually such visits are returned much sooner. Relations between the Russian and Italian courts were not very cordial, owing to French intrigues and Russian resentment of Italy's adherence to the Triple Alliance.

[2] The "terrible" Turk had his protectors.

all foreign attacks, and that they may concentrate their energies upon the peaceful development of their national life.

As the protector of all Slav Interests in the Balkans, Russia has constantly striven to arouse in the Balkan peoples the consciousness that they must unite as closely as possible for the sake of the common good.[1] This will also be our endeavour in the future; which, however, can be fully achieved only if the Balkan States themselves assist us in the endeavour, and, for this reason, it is with the greatest satisfaction that we welcome every proof of growing accord among them. These endeavours have been directly favoured by the meeting at Racconigi and this will contribute to the further development of the fundamental principle of our policy in the Near East. This principle may be briefly summed up:

"The Balkan for the Balkan States."

(180) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Report, Oct.* 24-*Nov.* 6, 1909.

The meeting of our Czar with the King of Italy was at first regarded by the Turkish Government and by public opinion as an auspicious event for Turkey. The official paper, "Tanin," having ascertained that *the basis of the understanding between Russia and Italy was the maintenance of the status quo in the Balkans,* published an article on October 19 expressing the opinion that in this case Turkey might view the meeting as an important event.

This view is absolutely in accordance with the statement made by the Italian ambassador here on behalf of Tittoni; it also accords with what I have heard in my conversations with Turkish political leaders. *In a conversation with the grand vizier, he told me, with evident satisfaction, that the meeting at Racconigi was a significant victory won by Russian diplomacy over Austria-Hungary.*

Other views, however, are now being heard. From some confidential source, probably an Austro-Hungarian one, *the Turkish Government has learned that at Racconigi the eventuality, that it might not be possible to maintain the status quo in the Balkans,*[2] *was also discussed, and, that in this case, Russia and Italy had promised each other compensations at the expense of Turkey. It is also said that*

[1] Pan-Slav ideal.
[2] Which was the case.

Crete was discussed at Racconigi in a sense unfavorable to Turkey. The simultaneous visit of the King of Bulgaria to Serbia and the rumours in regard to the non-renewal of the Triple Alliance have but increased this uneasiness . . . . . In my opinion we should give the grand vizier here certain information concerning the negotiations at Racconigi and try to persuade him that the word "compensation" was not uttered at Racconigi and that no resolutions of any kind were adopted unfavorable to Turkey. *Also, it seems to me that certain confidential statements made to the Turkish ambassadors at Rome and at St. Petersburg would produce a favorable impression here.*[1] *The Italian Ambassador is of the opinion that such statements would create all the more a desirable effect if they were delivered through the instrumentality of the London Cabinet.* I agree absolutely with this opinion.

(181) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Iswolsky. Letter, Oct. 25-Nov. 7,* 1909.

I do not wish to leave Rome without informing you of various impressions made on me since my return here. True, they are only in the nature of intimations, but still they may help to give you an idea of the state of feeling in various circles here. The very favourable impression made by the visit of our czar to Italy continues to exert its influence. This impression has far exceeded the expectations and, I might say, the hope, of Tittoni. In the political world, delight over the rapprochement with Russia is emphasized again and again. *Direct contact between Russia and Italy is now desired here, without the mediation of France, which was regarded formerly as an important factor.*

When the French fleet arrived at Naples, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs felt a certain uneasiness, for fear that the coincidence of the two events might create an unfavourable impression in Germany and Austria-Hungary. As Tittoni wishes to avoid arousing the suspicion of these two Powers, he instructed the representatives of the press to refrain from all comment on the presence of the French fleet. It appears that similar instructions were given to the representatives of the foreign press at Rome. The Italian newspapers followed

[1] What guarantee would there have been that these "certain confidential statements" represented fact and not fiction?

these instructions, giving but very brief reports of the festivities in Naples.

(182) *The Same to the Same. Letter, April* 13-26, 1910.

Our ministry has forwarded to me the communications made to us by Germany and Austria in regard to the Persian question. *As a certain difference in the attitude of the Italian ambassador at St. Petersburg and the Italian chargé d'affaires in London has become apparent, I have asked Bollati which of the two Italian representatives has given expression to the real opinion of his Government.* Bollati most decisively denies that the Italian representatives have been instructed to make any statement to us in respect of the Persian loan; they are merely to keep the Italian Government advised as to the conditions of the proposed financial operation . . . . . .

It was a mere coincidence that the inquiry of the Italian chargé d'affaires in London occurred simultaneously with the communication of the German and Austrian ambassadors, *and the Italian Government insists that we should not view this coincidence as an arrangement agreed on by the members of the Triple Alliance.* The sphere of action of the Triple Alliance is, geographically, clearly defined. As Bollati said to me, during the visit here of the German Imperial Chancellor, Persia and the Persian loan were in no way discussed. I believe, Bollati's statement may be considered all the more satisfactory, as it refers to a question which arose previous to San Giuliano's [1] accession to office. Nevertheless, the British ambassador considered it necessary to revert to the Persian question in his first interview with the new minister. *San Giuliano declared emphatically that Italy was bound by the Triple Alliance Treaty only in absolutely and definitely fixed questions, possessing in every other respect unconditional freedom of action, whereby she would exclusively take into consideration her own national interests.*

(183) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Iswolsky. Letter, Aug.* 25-*Sept.* 7, 1910.

San Giuliano has just returned from Austria after visiting first Salzburg, then Ischl, according to programme. He was

[1] Italian minister of foreign affairs.

thoroughly satisfied with the reception accorded him and he has received the most favourable impression of his journey. So far as political results are concerned, the Minister says, they fully come up to his expectations. *He was able to convince himself that the Vienna Cabinet is sincere and has but the one object in view—that of maintaining peace and the present situation in the Balkans.* It could not be otherwise just now, as the interests of each individual Power will be best protected by the present condition in the Balkans, and only in this way can the new régime in Turkey be developed. *In reply to my remark that the "Journal des Débats"* [1] *has wittily characterized Austria's sympathies for the Balkan States as "extending to the point of annexation," the Minister said, he entertained no fears for the immediate future, and remote events would not yet be discussed.*

(184) *Iswolsky, Russian Ambassador at Paris, to the Acting Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Neratoff. Telegram,* July 9-22, 1911.

Personal. I see from your telegram, No. 921, that an exchange of views between us and Austria-Hungary regarding Albania has begun. I direct your special attention to my confidential letter treating of my interview with the Italian ambassador here, which you will receive tomorrow. *This letter will recall to you that Tittoni and I mutually pledged ourselves at Racconigi not to conclude any new agreement regarding Albania without first coming to an understanding with each other.* I beg you to send me instructions, in case the Italian ambassador should address to me a new inquiry.

(185) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Oct.* 25-*Nov.* 7, 1911. *No.* 1724.

I am telegraphing to Constantinople.

The Italian Ambassador here has asked me how we stand in regard to the statements made in the "Reichspost" concerning the agreements reached at Racconigi. As it is possible that you will be asked questions in this connection, I am advising you of the purport of my answer to the Italian Ambassador:

I see no reason for denying that in the course of the discussion at

[1] Of Paris.

Racconigi regarding the general European situation we also discussed the question of the Turkish Straits and of Italy's special interests in Tripoli—a question of interest to us, as is generally known even to the Turks. There is no occasion, however, to attach to this exchange of views the character of an intentional, aggressive convention directed against Turkey. I beg you to use the above as a guide, as the object of the "Reichspost" is probably to arouse mistrust against us in Turkey.[1]

(186) *Neratoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome. Strictly Confidential Letter, Aug.* 13-26, 1911. *No.* 550.

The Italian Ambassador has informed me in confidence of his Government's intention to put an end to the continual unpleasantnesses which are being provoked by Turkey at Tripoli. In consideration thereof, and chiefly under pressure of public opinion, it was San Giuliano's intention to take the strongest possible measures, in order to re-establish normal conditions at Tripoli and to force Turkey into a proper regard for Italian interests.[2]

On my inquiring in what manner the Italian Government proposed to attain this object and whether it did not apprehend the resistance of the Sublime Porte, *Melegari*[3] *said everything had been considered and Italy was prepared for all contingencies.*

In the course of the conversation I learned that France and England, as well as Germany and Austria-Hungary are not only informed of Italy's intentions, but that they are not raising any objections to them.

In bringing the above to your notice, I request you to thank the Italian Government for this information, and to give them to understand that the fact of Melegari's not having mentioned to us any new agreements between Italy and Austria-Hungary, regarding the Balkan question, leads us to presume that the Tripolitan question will entail no change in the present situation.

[1] The Turkish government was to believe that the Italo-Russian discussions on "the question of the Turkish Straits and of Italy's special interests in Tripoli" had been in a sense favorable to Turkey, which was not the fact, as brought out by the Vienna "Reichspost" at the time and shown in these documents.

[2] The Agreement of Racconigi was supposed to guarantee the *status quo* of Turkey in regard to her European provinces. It was entered into by Russia and Italy to checkmate Austria-Hungary, Russia being moved by her Pan-Slav ideals and Italy by her designs upon the Adriatic littoral.

[3] Italian ambassador at St. Petersburg.

(187) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Neratoff. Confidential Letter, Aug.* 30-*Sept.* 12, 1911.

. . . . . Toretta[1] informed me, in confidence, that Aehrenthal had received the Duke of Avarna's[2] communication and that no negotiations whatever had taken place on the subject. Furthermore, I heard that Italy is treating the Tripolitan question quite separately, and purposely does not bring it into connection with the general political situation; Italy's freedom of action is, therefore, unhampered by conditions of any kind or obligations whatsoever. This is Italy's position towards all Powers, especially towards Austria-Hungary. Toretta added, still more confidentially, that the Roman Cabinet had resolved upon the final settlement of the Tripolitan question at the present moment, *for the reason that it wants the African question settled before a change in the present situation in the Balkans takes place, in order later on to be able to protect the Italian interests beyond the Adriatic Sea.*

"May I," I asked, "conclude from your words that you will openly inform us of your further intentions when their time comes?"

He replied that what I had just heard was a short resumé of his conversations with the Minister: *In considering the Tripolitan and Balkan questions, Italy would never lose sight of her arrangements and agreements with Russia.*

(188) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Aug.* 31-*Sept.* 13, 1911. *No.* 843.

Yesterday San Giuliano confirmed Toretta's statements which I reported in my letter of the 30th inst., and categorically declared that the Tripolitan question would be settled independently of all others. The minister did not enter upon any further details.

(189) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Letter, Sept.* 13-26, 1911.

I have often spoken to Tittoni about Tripoli, because his view is of all the greater interest since he is thoroughly versed in Italian politics and exerts an undeniable influence on King Victor Emanuel. He told me that, personally, he did not consider the unrol-

[1] Italian under-secretary for foreign affairs.
[2] Italian ambassador at Vienna.

ling of this question opportune, but he believed that the government was forced by pressure of public opinion to take active measures. *On my asking him what the attitude of Italy's two allies would be, Tittoni replied that—as he had already told me in confidence three years ago at Racconigi—the documents of the Triple Alliance contained a special provision, or rather a special supplement, by which Germany and Austria were obliged to allow Italy a free hand in Tripoli. This provision was exacted by Italy on the occasion of the last renewal of the Triple Alliance.*[1] Italy will, therefore, encounter no resistance in that quarter. With regard to Austria in particular, Tittoni did not believe that she could demand any compensation, e. g. in The Albanian question, *because there existed a special agreement between Italy and Austria with regard to Albania which did not touch upon the Tripolitan question.*[2]

I, on my part, did not conceal from Tittoni my apprehension that military measures by Italy in Tripoli would react upon the general situation in the Near East. It was especially to be feared that the present régime at Constantinople would not be able to hold out, and that one or the other of the Balkan States would intervene—a contingency which might lead to a new forward step on the part of Austria-Hungary. Tittoni replied, the Young Turk régime had proved itself to be so inadequate that its disappearance would hardly be regretted, morever, it would probably disappear even without Tripoli.

As regards the Balkan States, Serbia is interested in supporting Turkey; Montenegro would always be held in check; there only remains, therefore, Bulgaria. He knew, however, that Roumania had undertaken not to allow a Bulgarian attack on Turkey. Besides, he added, the Italian fleet is strong enough to prevent the dispatch of Turkish troops to Tripoli. Therefore, Turkey will not be weakened in her military position in the Balkans, and no change in the general situation will take place in that respect. Finally, as regards Austria, she will hardly take action independently, and an advance from that quarter could only take place in connection with general events in the Balkans. Tittoni, therefore, considers it desirable that, under the prevailing conditions, a continual ex-

[1] [2] A veritable labyrinth of diplomatic deception and double-dealing.

change of views should take place between Rome, St. Petersburg, and Vienna, since that was the only way of avoiding an unforeseen action on the part of Austria.[1]

(190) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Sept.* 14-27, 1911.

The letter previous to this was already written, when I learnt from Tittoni that the Italian chargé d'affaires at Constantinople[2] *had been instructed to inform Turkey that Italy was obliged to proceed with the occupation of Tripoli, and that a reply from the Constantinople Government was expected within 24 hours. At the same time Tittoni admitted, in contradiction of his former statements, that the king and Giolitti*[3] *had asked him for his opinion prior to their having arrived at a decision in this matter, and that he, Tittoni, had, after careful consideration, given his consent to this step. According to his words, Italy's step is the direct and inevitable outcome of Kiderlen's policy. If Germany, in renouncing the Algeciras Act, has hastened the declaration of the French protectorate over Morocco, and in doing so demanded compensations for herself, there was nothing left to Italy but to put the claims to Tripoli which she had reserved for herself, into effect at this juncture, because she could not but fear that Italy's claims might at some future time, and on the occasion of an eventual change in the French Government, be forgotten or, possibly, declared void.*

During my conversation with Tittoni I took the opportunity of reminding him of the conditions on which we, on our part, have promised to acknowledge Italy's freedom of action in Tripoli. I asked him, on my own personal responsibility, whether he did not think that Italy, which at the present moment is proceeding to execute her program at Tripoli, should now give us guarantees that in future she will not forget to fulfil the parallel obligations undertaken by her in respect of our claims to the Turkish straits.[4] *Tittoni answered in the affirmative, and remarked it would be an easy matter to lay down the respective obligations in a suitable formula.*

[1] Tittoni would seem to be a graduate of the Machiavellian school.

[2] The *chef de mission*—ambassador or minister—is never there when this ticklish business has to be taken in hand. The chargé d'affaires has the advantage of not being responsible for some of the "assurances" made immediately before by his chief.

[3] Italian prime minister.

[4] Reciprocity at the cost of an innocent third party.

(191) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Sept.* 18-*Oct.* 1, 1911. *No.* 1357.

I am telegraphing to Rome.

"The Turkish Ambassador here has communicated to me his Government's request that we should try and induce Italy to accept the Turkish proposals which had been submitted in reply to the Italian ultimatum. *I replied that only the position created by the declaration of war, i.e., the occupation of Tripoli, could form the basis of eventual negotiations between the two belligerents. If a formula should be found at Constantinople which allows for this contingency, we are ready to arrange an exchange of views, as well as to discuss any measure likely to confine the conflict to Tripoli.* Such a program also corresponds with the interests of Turkey, and the endeavours of the Powers will apparently be directed towards this object. We are convinced that this is in the interests also of Italy."

(192) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Neratoff. Telegram, Sept.* 17-30, 1911.

While up to the moment of the occupation of Tripoli by the Italians the slightest allusion to mediation must evoke a categorical rejection here and can only draw upon us Italy's displeasure, *it appears to me that the offer of our good services after Italy has settled in North Africa is quite feasible. It is desirable that our friendly steps in that direction should anticipate any German proposals, in order to prevent her from profiting by this good opportunity of strengthening her influence in Constantinople.* Please send instructions.

(193) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Telegram, Sept.* 25-*Oct.* 8, 1911.

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs wholly agrees with you that mediation will be impossible until the necessity of assuming the standpoint of the Italian ultimatum will have been recognised at Constantinople, i.e. *until Turkey accepts in principle the occupation of Tripoli.*[1] *On the other hand, he does not consider it to be to the interests of Russia, France and England to leave the rôle of*

[1] A cold-blooded way diplomatists have.

mediator to Germany, and he thinks the three Entente Powers should profit by the first opportunity of jointly appearing in this rôle.[1] From M. Bompard's [2] reports, however, it is evident that our ambassador has one-sidedly proposed peace negotiations, at the same time keeping in view the possibility of maintaining Turkish garrisons at Tripoli. At Paris the conviction prevails that Italy will unconditionally refuse such a proposal. *The French Minister of Foreign Affairs proposes that the Russian, French and English ambassadors at Constantinople be instructed always to consult together and not to undertake any steps without a prior agreement.* Please send instructions so that I can give M. de Selves a reply.

(194) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at Rome. Telegram, Oct. 9-22, 1911. No. 1557.*

The German chargé d'affaires has communicated to me the purport of a telegram of the German Ambassador at Constantinople to Kiderlen,[3] in which Baron Marschall,[4] evidently in full agreement with Pallavicini,[5] expresses himself very pessimistically with regard to the internal position of Turkey and predicts an inevitable war in the Balkans, "if the Italo-Turkish war should continue to last for some months or weeks." To my question who would begin the war in the Balkans, since Italy had promised not to undertake any war-like action in the Peninsula, Lucius replied, Said Pasha's Government would hardly be able to prevent the Italians being expelled from Turkey, and that would *make it imperative for the Italians either to attack Albania or to occupy one of the islands in the Archipelago. The Italian Ambassador informed me that his government had received disquieting news from the Slav Balkan States, and he pointed out that counsels of moderation would seem to be opportune.*

On my inquiring in what manner Italy would reply to the expulsion of the Italians, he answered, giving it as his personal opinion, that Italy would probably confine herself to occupying one of the Islands, but that she was already prepared to conclude peace

[1] With the cards all stacked against Turkey.
[2] French ambassador at Constantinople.
[3] Kiderlen-Wächter, German secretary of state of foreign affairs.
[4] von Bieberstein, German ambassador at Constantinople.
[5] Austro-Hungarian ambassador at Constantinople.

conditional on a religious bond being set up between Tripoli and the Caliphate, and a material compensation of Turkey. *Melegari's statement, coupled with Marschall's apprehensions, does not let the occupation of an island appear out of the question,*[1] *and we must carefully watch Turkey's further steps, in order to restrain her from any provocation such as the expulsion of the Italians would constitute.*

(195) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Neratoff. Letter, Oct. 24-Nov. 6,* 1911.

Some time ago, I drew your attention to the public feeling in England aroused by Italy's sudden decision to occupy Tripoli. *This feeling, as well as the press comment were on the whole not favourable to Italy. The most important newspapers, with the "Times" at their head, saw in the Italian action a misuse of brute force, and pointed out—and that not without an ironical touch—that the Italian complaints of the Turkish administration had matured at the right moment in the midst of the Morocco crisis.*[2]

Public opinion went further still than the newspapers, and this tendency has been apparent all through.

The political tendencies of the government, however, and of the most influential circles, have moved rather in an opposite direction. Turkey and the Young Turk Party have lost their former popularity in England, *and the Government is anxious not to put any obstacles in the way of good relations with Italy in the future.*[3]

As a matter of fact, the first criticisms which were derogatory of the Italian action, rather than friendly to Turkey, soon calmed down in the press. But since last week the original feeling has been re-awakened; *it is founded on newspaper reports of so-called atrocities said to have been perpetrated by the Italians during the fighting of late. Even supposing the newspaper reports to be exaggerated—as I would gladly assume—this is a question which always arouses the English people. One need only recall what an important rôle the "Bulgarian atrocities" played on the occasion of the persecution of Christians by the Turks prior to our last Balkan war.*

[1] Which the Powers wanted to forestall.
[2] When Germany could not protest. The time was chosen in collusion with the French government.
[3] The price was Italy's desertion of her allies.

When the truth comes to be recognised, the excitement of public opinion will surely also be allayed. Today I submit to you a statement which the Italian ambassador here has seen fit to publish in perhaps none too happy a manner, and at the same time a "declaration of war" on the part of the "Times" correspondent at Malta. *This correspondent had left Tripoli because the Italian authorities had censored his reports too strictly. I think the Italian Government has gone too far in its endeavours to restrict the liberty of the press.* Correspondents may, no doubt, become dangerous in times of war. But absolute silence is equally harmful. The Turks will discover in all these rumours a new source of resistance and the rumours of Italian defeats will, without doubt, contribute towards this. Thus Italy's task, especially in the East, will not be made easier, the less so since this task is far more difficult than was originally supposed in Rome.[1]

(196) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Telegram, Oct.* 19-*Nov.* 1, 1911.. *No.* 158.

According to Tittoni, *Italy is sure of France's full and unconditional support; whereas England's sympathies are oscillating between Italy and Turkey. He believes it to be to the interest of the re-establishment of peace that Constantinople be given to understand, by Russia, France and England conjointly, that they see no other expedient but the annexation.* At his urgent request that I should communicate this to you, I declared myself ready to do so, adding, however, that I did not think you would make up your mind thus to take an initiative at the present moment.

(197) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, Oct.* 22-*Nov.* 4, 1911.

All reports from Rome tend to show that Italy has decided to carry her warlike measures into the Red Sea and the Aegaean; this, perhaps, explains why Italy wishes us, France, and England, to undertake more energetic steps at Constantinople. *But it must not be forgotten that such a step by the said three Powers would greatly bene-*

[1] Under the able leadership of Enver Pasha, the Turks, though cut off from their bases in Europe and Asia Minor, put up a heroic defense, obliging the Italians to stay near the coast under the protection of their men-of-war.

fit Germany and Austria, because the feeling of disappointment and indignation in Turkey would go against the Entente Powers. Are we not to gather from Tittoni's words that Italy wishes to conclude peace as quickly as possible? And, in such a case, could we perhaps, find out from Tittoni what agreements Italy would be prepared to enter into to attain this object? Such a settlement of the question might be successfully attempted by the three Entente Powers.[1]

(198) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, March* 12-25, 1912.

I have frequently called attention of late to the dissatisfaction prevailing here with regard to France. The incidents of the "Cartage" and the "Manuba"[2] together with a number of speeches in the French chamber, have excited public opinion here to a most extraordinary degree. *The highflown tone adopted by the French press in regard to Italy gives particular offence.* The present war has greatly increased the feeling of national consciousness among the Italians, and, as they say, they do not intend to allow any foreign tutelage.

Unfortunately, the French press seems to pour oil into the flames. As the French ambassador here told me, *the press is under the control of the French insurance companies who have invested nearly* 300 *millions in life insurance here and fear the loss they would suffer, if a state monopoly for life insurance should be introduced in Italy.* The German Ambassador very skilfully takes advantage of the mistakes made by the rivals of his country and has commissioned the German journalist, Mühling, to influence the German press in favour of Italy.

In the Foreign office they realize that the strained relations between Italy and the neighbouring Republic exert an unfavourable influence on the international position of the kingdom, as Italy is thus placed entirely at the mercy of her allies. Even the sup-

[1] In other words, would Italy completely abandon her allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary and thus open the door to the general war that was to make Russia supreme in all lands inhabited by Slavs, and then allow her to fulfil her "historic mission" at Constantinople, in the straits and in Southwest Asia?

[2] Occasioned by Italian efforts to put an end to the smuggling of arms and ammunition into Tripoli through Tunis, a French colony adjoining the invaded territory.

porters of the Triple Alliance realize this. *Italy's actual needs point in the direction of the three Entente Powers, as this political combination has greater possibilities of satisfying Italian interests. Italy's dependence on France and England has been only increased by her establishing herself in Lybia. Wedged in between the two Powers on the North African coast, Italy is more than ever in need of open and friendly relations with them. The extension of her sea coast will permit her to disregard the strong Anglo-French forces in the Mediterranean less than ever.*[1] The hope of being able to offer opposition with her own fleet, perhaps in conjunction with Austria, would lead to a severe disappointment. The solidarity, or at least the similarity of Italian endeavours with those of the Entente Powers in the Balkans, cannot be denied by even the most ardent supporter of the Triple Alliance.

Events, however, have so shaped themselves that one can see here no way out of the present situation. In the Foreign Office they expressed to me the hope that after you have succeeded in reconciling Italy and Turkey, you will seek to improve relations between the two Latin nations, for, as they said to me, *"the way from Rome to Paris leads via St. Petersburg."*[2]

(199) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 17-30, 1912. No.* 111.

The Italian ambassador called on me yesterday and told me, he had found Grey very much worried over the events at Constantinople, and especially so on account of the long duration of the war. Grey said he considered an exchange of views between the Powers to be imperative, in order to undertake a new step as soon as possible. I believe Imperiali[3] wants peace more than ever, and personally he thinks that the religious supremacy of the Sultan[4] might possibly be admitted.

[1] This probably was realized in Paris, London and St. Petersburg, before Italy was given a free hand in North Africa.

[2] It is shown elsewhere herein that the way from St. Petersburg to London led through Paris—the "mechanism of the Entente."

[3] Italian ambassador at London.

[4] Over the Mussulmans in the parts of North Africa annexed by Italy—a function of the Caliphate.

(200) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 17-30, 1912. *No.* 112.

After I had learnt from the newspapers that the Turkish government refuses to open the straits,[1] I drew Grey's particular attention to what this refusal meant to Russia. I told him the Russian government could not permit the present state of affairs to continue; public opinion in Russia would not concern itself with the responsibility of Turkey or Italy, nor with any treaty rights, but would simply and unanimously demand that the straits be re-opened to Russian trade, and the government would certainly have to yield. I further said that at the present moment, *it was not so much the question of right or wrong, but we had to deal with facts, and that a further development of the disputed point might assume unexpected proportions.* Grey told me in reply that he had just been receiving a deputation of English merchants; something like a million tons of wheat in English ships were being detained, and he quite agreed with me that the situation was untenable. He told me he would telegraph to Lowther [2] to demand the immediate opening of the straits for 15 days. I replied, this was merely a provisional measure. He answered that then we would in any case have 15 days for negotiations; that this period seemed acceptable to Italy also; *and that by this means we were forestalling the danger of an immediate war.* Neither of the two Governments could then complain of the rights of the belligerents having been violated, and by this means, neutrality would be maintained. *Grey told me he was considering a parallel step at Rome to demand that during these* 15 *days the Italian fleet refrain from any kind of attack.* But he had not as yet decided upon this step. I replied that Russia was as anxious to preserve peace as England was; that I could not say what impression the instructions given to Lowther would make at St. Petersburg, and I did not know whether our ambassador would be instructed to support this step.

[1] Turkey had the right to prevent foreign shipping from navigating the Dardanelles and Bosphorus. The particulars of this condition will be learned from the documents following. Russia had made many attempts to place herself in control of the straits, the first dating back to 860 and 1048 A. D. Peter the Great also essayed this, and possession of the straits was one of the motives of Czar Alexander II when he undertook the *liberation* of the Balkan Slavs.

[2] British ambassador at Constantinople.

(201) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, April 18-May 1, 1912. No. 790.*

The British Ambassador has asked me whether we intend applying to Italy to obtain from her a promise not to undertake any warlike actions against the Dardanelles, during a certain period at least, so that the neutral ships could pass the straits during such period. In reply I told the ambassador I could not consent to such a step at Rome, because I knew from official information that Italy would positively refuse to make such a promise. The proposed step would, therefore, be a failure from the outset and would not bring about a solution of the existing difficulties.

(202) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 19-May 2, 1912. No. 115.*

Nicolson tells me that Lowther has telegraphed that the Turkish Government proposed to open the Dardanelles as soon as the mines had been removed, but reserved to herself the right again to close the straits in case of military exigencies arising. Grey has enquired how long it would take for the mines to be removed.

(203) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April 19-May 2, 1912. No. 116.*

After Nicolson [1] had given me the information contained in my telegram No. 115 he added, as a personal observation, that it would be difficult to decide at what moment a military exigency might arise, because Turkey had no outpost vessels at her disposal. *He also reminded me of the fact that the English standpoint regarding the straits-agreement was not wholly identical with ours. To this last remark I replied, likewise personally, that we do not dispute Turkey's absolute right to close the straits [2]; this right seems to be tacitly conceded,* only in case, however, of an absolute exigency arising, and on condition that a free passage is allowed as soon as the danger is averted.

Nicolson told me that the possibility of a new advance of the Italian fleet would cause grave difficulties; if, for instance, Italy were to occupy Mytilene it would be difficult to maintain that no danger

[1] British under-secretary for foreign affairs.
[2] Established by many general and private treaties and sanctioned by the principle of "territorial waters."

threatened Turkey. Nicolson asked me to consider this conversation as personal.

(204) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, April 26-May 9, 1912.*

I think my telegram in which I reported to you on the attitude of the French Government in the matter of the closing of the Dardanelles, requires supplementing by a few details. I have had several conversations with M. Poincaré [1] on this matter, before, as well as after the decision of the Sublime Porte *to open the Straits to international trade.* From these conversations I have gained the clear impression that Poincaré has, on the one hand, done everything to carry through an actual settlement of this question in our favour, *but that, on the other hand, he is not wholly convinced of the justification of the legal thesis set up by us, viz: That Turkey is bound to allow neutral shipping to pass the Straits in times of war as well as in peace.* Poincaré did not conceal from me that, in his conversations with the Turkish ambassador and in his instructions to Bompard [2] stress has been laid on the side of practical necessity, not on the legal side of the question. *He also admitted to me that, after a careful study of the texts, he inclines towards denying the legal justifications; but he had not been content with a personal study of this important question, and had intended to submit it to the consideration of experts in international law, when the news arrived that the Porte had decided to accede to our demand.*[3]

Poincaré does not wish to deny that the Straits are in a peculiar position on account of the existing treaties, and that there devolves upon Turkey a certain obligation in favour of international trade. *But, since no actual regulations exist regarding the internationalizing of the Straits as, for instance, in the case of the Suez Canal, the Turkish Government can hardly be denied the right of adopting the necessary defensive measure in case of an immediate military danger.* On my remarking that the defence of the Dardanelles was, in our opinion, possible also without their being completely closed, he replied that

[1] French minister of foreign affairs.
[2] French ambassador at Constantinople.
[3] In other words, Russia violated international law and a number of treaties to which she was signatory, the Turks yielding to *force majeure.*

he shared my view, but here again we had to deal with a fact and not a question of legal right.

In the further course of conversation, Poincaré suggested, casually, so to speak, an idea to which I wish to draw your special attention, viz.; That, if our view that Turkey was bound to keep the Straits open to neutral trade in war time as well as in peace should prevail, it would, in the end, lead to a formal neutralisation of the Straits, *the more so since such a standpoint would be in accord with the general evolution of modern international law. We should, in his opinion, not lose sight of this fact, so as not to get into a conflict ourselves with our own political interests and aspirations.* . . . . .

(205) *The Russian Ambassador in London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 2-15, 1912. No.* 126.

Grey told me confidentially that he had good reasons to believe that Italy was desirous of peace and that she was prepared, not only to acknowledge the religious supremacy of the Caliph,[1] but also to settle an annuity upon the Sheik-ul-Islam,[2] as an outward expression of this supremacy. Grey added, however, that he did not wish to take the initiative as to any new proposal. *He considers the above concession to be inadequate,*[3] but he wished to inform you of it, so that you could make use of this circumstance whenever the Powers would find it feasible to renew their efforts at bringing about peace.

(206) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 28-May* 11, 1912. *No.* 58.

In the course of a long conversation, the French Ambassador here pointed out that the Entente Powers must seriously consider the question of mediation, in order to forestall Germany and Austria who are trying to find a suitable formula. *M. Barrère did not conceal from me that his Government was very much worried over the*

[1] The Sultan of Turkey in his so-called spiritual capacity; not very dissimilar to the office of the Pope.

[2] Administrative or temporal head of the Moslem world, residing at Constantinople.

[3] Because the British government and public did not relish the Italian raid upon Tripoli and Lybia: Firstly, because the enterprise caused much unrest in Islam; secondly, Italy was now a political neighbor of Egypt.

spirit prevailing among the Mohammedan subjects of France, and wanted the war to end as soon as possible.

(207) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, May* 8-21, 1912.

The cooling of relations between Italy and France is a very deplorable affair in view of our interests. Since the incidents of the "Manuba" and "Carthage" these relations have become visibly worse. In the Foreign Office they told me that the Italian Government was fully justified in complaining of France who has taken no measures to prevent the transport of war contraband through Tunis to Tripoli.

On the other hand, the French ambassador[1] *here has spoken very slightingly of the policy pursued by the present Italian Cabinet, especially in regard to the occupation of the Aegaean Islands by Italy. It is his opinion that this occupation can only be permitted as a temporary measure, and that permanent seizure would run directly counter to the interests of France in the Mediterranean. For years the French Republic has made the greatest endeavours to preserve and insure its interests in this sea. These words have direct reference to the Agreement concluded in* 1902 *between France and Italy,*[2] *the text of which has never been communicated to us, the substance of which, however, we know, because Barrère considered it necessary at the time to advise our ambassador, Nelidoff, of the conclusion of this Treaty.* **Barrère has now likewise spoken to me of the Agreement of 1902, and I conclude from his words that the ten-years duration of this Treaty has induced the French ambassador to propose to the Italian government that a declaration be made through an exchange of Notes to the effect that this Treaty remain in force. Evidently the Italian government has raised no formal protest against the renewal of the Treaty, but has laid down certain conditions which seem to excite the ambassador very much. He no longer conceals his displeasure at the activities of Tittoni, the Italian ambassador at Paris, because Tittoni, it is said, does not consider the present moment desirable for the renewal of the Treaty of 1902 in its present form and context.**

[1] Barrère.
[2] The treaty which led to a military understanding concerning the Franco-Italian border.

In addition, Italian public opinion accuses a French financial group of wishing to grant a considerable loan to Turkey to be guaranteed by the harbour tolls of Smyrna and Beirut. If this rumour should prove true, it would be regarded as a violation of neutrality.[1] All the foregoing circumstances create an atmosphere which Germany and Austria could easily use to their advantage, and this possibility alarms the French ambassador here above everything else.

(208) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 5-18, 1912. No. 74.*

The press today is still occupying itself with yesterday's incident.[2] *The more important organs which receive their information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as the Temps, Journal des Débats, Matin, etc., retain their composure and limit themselves to the publication of démentis.* Several newspapers, chiefly of an extreme or opposition tendency which have always been hostile to Russia, are repeating their attacks on Russia and on me personally.

The effort is clearly visible to give the incident a political character and to explain our dissatisfaction with Georges Louis, the French Ambassador in St. Petersburg,[3] *by the assumption, that Russia apparently wishes to pursue an aggressive policy towards Turkey and that she has in this encountered resistance on the part of the French ambassador. It is known that several papers, which are writing in this vein, receive subsidies from the Turkish Embassy which distributes considerable sums among the local press.*[4] *I am taking measures to re-establish the truth in the newspapers, but as I have no funds at my disposal this is very difficult.*

[1] Negotiations for this purpose were in progress, but had been initiated by Turkey before the outbreak of the Italo-Turkish war. They were incident to the development of the French railroads in Syria.

[2] The French ambassador at St. Petersburg was alleged to have said that Russia favored the occupation by Italy of a number of Turkish islands in the Aegaean Sea, which was contrary to what the French public wanted.

[3] M. Louis had his own views on Franco-Russian relations, being a very sane and temperate man, whom Poincaré hated cordially but could not remove from his post because he enjoyed the confidence of the French public. The day following Poincaré's installation as president of the Republic, Georges Louis was recalled and from then on Sazonoff and Iswolsky controlled the situation.

[4] See footnote 1 on page 175. While it is a well-known fact that newspapers everywhere are prone to serve the purposes of diplomatists, it was hardly proper for M. Iswolsky to throw stones.

(209) *The Same to the Same. Letter, May* 10-23, 1912.

In my telegram of yesterday, which refers to Samos, I reported to you that people here are much concerned on account of the Italian occupation of so many islands in the Aegaean Sea. At the beginning of the war, Poincaré always called such an occupation a suitable means of bringing pressure to bear upon Turkey. *Lately, however, Poincaré seems to have changed his opinion owing to the impression made upon him by the Italian operations in the archipelago and, perhaps, under the influence of London.* He admits the occupation of the islands to be a means of forcing Turkey to yield, but, on the other hand, he fears that, even if Italy has no intention of settling there for good, the question of their autonomy and the protection of the local population against Turkish cruelties will be raised when the islands are restored to Turkey. Tittoni has, as I know, assured Poincaré that Italy had no intention whatever of settling on the islands, *he did not deny, however, that the Italian government proposed to introduce various reforms, and improvements into these islands, and that such a course would, in fact, be liable to bring under discussion the question of the future fate of the population under Turkish rule.* [1]

Yesterday, Poincaré informed me that the idea of a conference occupied the minds of Rome as well as of Constantinople. On the Turkish side they seem to be afraid that at such a conference other questions beside that of Tripoli might be discussed. Personally, Poincaré believes it will be possible that certain promises are made to Turkey in that respect. On this occasion he again expressed the thought that, should the Tripolitan question be submitted to a Conference, then France would be much less bound by any obligations of neutrality and that she would most decidedly support the Italian claims, in accordance with the agreement of 1902.

I enclose two articles from the "Temps" which confirm what I said above. The writer of these articles is the well-known Tardieu who, under Pichon, had for some time fallen out with the French Foreign Office, but who has now gotten again into contact with them and whose articles represent Poincaré's views. *During the incident with the French ambassador at St. Petersburg, Georges Louis,*

[1] The thin edge of the wedge of annexation.

he hastened to put his pen at my disposal.[1] In both articles Poincaré's fears regarding the occupation of the islands by Italy, as well as his idea of the conditions that should govern a conference, are plainly expressed. . . . . .

(210) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 15-28, 1912. *No.* 69.

The Foreign Minister told me that at the present moment Italy had no intention of occupying Mytilene, *but that she could not bind herself for the future, especially if the war were to last still longer. I asked the minister to give me the distinct promise that we should be notified in time in case the Italian general staff were to consider it necessary to undertake operations against this island. San Giuliano gave me this promise.*

(211) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 15-28, 1912. *No.* 70.

The Foreign Minister has positively assured me that he did not instruct Tittoni[2] *to talk about a conference with Poincaré.* If the Roman Cabinet had decided upon such a step we should have been informed of it first. If Tittoni has spoken about it to Poincaré, he has but expressed his personal opinion. He believes France herself has raised this question. Furthermore, the minister has informed the Italian representatives abroad by telegram that Italy had not suggested a conference, either directly or indirectly. *Italy could only participate in such a conference if its programme was settled beforehand.*

(212) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, May* 16-29, 1912. *No.* 1013.

I hear from a perfectly reliable source that Sir R. Rodd,[3] after having talked with Grey, told Imperiali[4] that the British Government would take no initiative towards ending the war, *but that it was strongly inclined to come to an understanding with Germany if*

[1] That is to say: Tardieu, intimate of Poincaré, filled the office of press agent.
[2] Italian ambassador at Paris, after retiring from the post of minister of foreign affairs.
[3] Sir Rennel Rodd, British ambassador at Rome.
[4] Italian ambassador at London.

such a step were to be originated by Berlin. Please find out in strictest confidence whether this information is correct.

(213) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 17-30, 1912. No. 143.*

Your telegram 1013 received.

I shall try to obtain the desired information. My impression is this: Grey wishes more and more that peace be concluded soon. But, as he has already told me, he does not wish to take the initiative. On the other hand, it is generally assumed here that Baron Marschall will raise this question and, perhaps, propose a basis for the negotiations. Grey told Rodd, perhaps, that he will not take the initiative to discuss this question with the German ambassador, but that he will gladly receive any possible notification from the latter. I believe, the go-between of whom Rodd made use has attached greater importance to Grey's words than they really possessed. *Among British ambassadors, Rodd is not one of those who possess influence.* In my opinion we must expect that the Berlin Cabinet will mention this matter and, perhaps, take an initiative. As you know, Grey told me he doubted the practicability of a conference, because it would be difficult to limit its program.

(214) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 17-30, 1912. No. 90.*

Poincaré told me that from Barrère's telegrams and Tittoni's words one could gather that, while the Italian government does not express itself in favour of a conference, yet it does not exclude the possibility of one. *Bompard telegraphs from Constantinople that the Turkish Ministerial Council has decided to give its consent to a conference only if its result is settled beforehand; Turkey will demand that Cyrenaica be restored to her and will admit only a civil protectorate of Italy over Tripoli.*

Poincaré thinks that under these circumstances one could not make a formal proposal. *Nevertheless, in his opinion Russia, France, and England should discuss this question among themselves, so as to come to an understanding on all details and to be prepared to come forward with their proposal of a conference at the opportune moment, because he is afraid that Emperor William will unexpectedly take such*

an initiative. Personally he thinks that the programme of the conference would have to be confined to the Italo-Turkish conflict and that even the question of the islands should be eliminated.

He admits the dangerous features of calling a conference,[1] but sees no other way out of it. He is very much troubled lest Italy should before long occupy Mytilene and Chios, whereby the whole situation would be aggravated and Turkey would be induced to close the Dardanelles again. He, therefore, told Tittoni Italy should in such case declare to the Powers, of her own accord, that she intended no action against the Dardanelles, in order thus to deprive Turkey of any excuse for closing the straits.

[1] Such conferences were always dangerous.

V

THE ENTENTE AND THE FRANCO-ITALIAN AGREEMENT OF 1902

(May 1912—July 1914)

(215) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Confidential Letter,* May 17-30, 1912.

The increasing coolness in Franco-Italian relations, which has become noticeable of late, cannot be of indifference to us. As you well know, we do not consider it expedient to work directly towards a formal withdrawal on the part of Italy from the Triple Alliance, but whilst allowing the present condition of things to remain outwardly as before, we consider it in reality most desirable to strengthen in every way possible the relations of the kingdom to us and to France.

Since we ourselves occupy for the moment an especially favourable position in this respect, we are, of course, prepared to embrace this favourable situation, in order, if France should so desire, to lend her active support in the adjustment of her difficulties with Italy. One of these difficulties is evidently what shall be the future fate of the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1902.

This Agreement has never been communicated to us, but so far as we know, it referred, mainly, to a demarcation of French and Italian interests in the Mediterranean and for this reason we should think that it would be without a time-limit. It may be possible, however, that this Agreement contains other provisions which have a time-limit, and that this is the reason why after ten years' duration, the question of renewing the agreement is being raised. So far as we know, the French wish the renewal of the agreement, whereas the Italians, doubtless under the influence of their ambassador at

Paris who advocates freedom of action, are in no hurry to enter into new obligations until the present tangled political situation is cleared up.

In England they are beginning to be uneasy, as they fear there, that in the event of a disagreement between Italy and France, Italy will again become more closely associated with the Triple Alliance. In this case, Tripoli might in Italian hands become a convenient naval base of operations for the Triple Alliance in the Mediterranean.

I therefore request you confidentially, to investigate the data I have just given you and to discover, if possible, whether there is any truth in the rumours about the renewal of the Agreement of 1902, what its provisions are, and what the attitude of the French Government is in the matter. Finally, we should also like to know whether France requires our mediation for the improvement of her relations with Italy.

(216) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Sazonoff. Letter, May 22-June 4, 1912.*

A certain improvement seems to have taken place of late in Franco-Italian relations. San Giuliano and Barrère informed me almost simultaneously that Tittoni had had an exhaustive conversation with Poincaré. I welcomed this information and expressed the hope that further friction and misunderstandings between the two states would be avoided in the future, as they were harmful to the interests of us all.

Here in the Foreign Office this new turn in affairs seems to be regarded as something of an Italian victory and it is believed that misunderstandings are now at an end for all time. The calmer, more farseeing French ambassador[1] is of a different opinion and places no special confidence in the exchange of views between Tittoni and Poincaré. He looks at this incident from the viewpoint of practical politics, and told me he would not be satisfied until the Agreement of 1902 had been extended without limitations of any kind. The delay in the renewal he ascribes to the nervousness of public opinion, the result of which is, that the Italian government gropes blindly in all directions, seeking to find a way out of its present difficult position.

[1] M. Barrère, a diplomatic master mind.

Then Barrère also sees a further obstacle in the way of the renewal of the former confidential relations between France and Italy in the personality of Tittoni, the present ambassador at Paris, who has compromised himself through petty political intrigues.

I am not able to judge whether this opinion is the personal view of Barrère or whether it reflects the standpoint of the French Government. I only know on very good authority that in his conversations with Giuliano he has quite strongly hinted at the unpopularity of Tittoni.[1] Barrère has frankly stated to me that not until Tittoni has been recalled, can the former cordial relations between the two governments be restored.

(217) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, May 24-June 6, 1912.*

After the receipt of your confidential letter of May 17-30, I induced Poincaré to discuss Franco-Italian relations with me. I tried to discover whether the rumour is true that the Agreement of 1902 has expired and that difficulties have arisen between France and Italy in regard to the renewal of this agreement. *I pointed out how contrary to the interests of the three Entente Powers it would be for a coolness to arise in the relations between France and Italy and for Italy to return to the Triple Alliance.* I also intimated that we would be ready to offer our friendly services to France.

Poincaré declared emphatically that the Agreement of 1902 *had no time-limit.* If the exact text of this agreement had not been communicated to us, it was only because France could not do so without the consent of Italy. But the contents of the agreement were familiar to us. *It contains a demarcation of French and Italian interests in the Mediterranean. The nature of the Agreement precludes a time-limit. Furthermore, a practical result of this agreement is an abandonment of the concentration of the French and Italian armies on the Franco-Italian frontier.*[2] *Should Italy on any occasion wish to bring about a change in the existing situation, it would be regarded as an unfriendly act on the part of Italy towards France.* But fortunately there is no question of this.

[1] Tittoni was, in the main, in favor of Italy adhering to the Triple Alliance.
[2] A very important admission to make.

Proceeding then to the general character of the present relations between Italy and France, Poincaré emphasized most decidedly the fact that neither government had allowed itself to be influenced by public opinion[1] and that recent events had in no way disturbed the friendly relations existing between them. *Barrère had lately received assurances to this effect from the Italian Government.* The same was true of the French Government, and even though France, bound by obligations of neutrality, might not always be in a position to give expression to her friendly feelings towards Italy, she would not fail to give her energetic support as soon as the Peace Conference met.

"Moreover," he continued, "I have reason to believe that Italy is fully convinced of France's friendship, and that just now the Italian government look on Russia and France as their best friends and expect help from them much sooner than from their allies."

As to the question of Italy's formal withdrawal from the Triple Alliance, Poincaré entirely agrees with you that there is no reason to work for such an end, as it could only bring about dangerous entanglements. The best would be to maintain the present situation, for Italy is a restraining element in the Triple Alliance. Still France must not forget that Italy belongs to the political combination opposed to us. For this reason the French government must take care that Italy does not obtain supremacy in the Mediterranean. With the present relative strength of the fleets a mere mobilization of the French naval forces would make impossible any hostile attempt on the part of Italy.

"You may rest assured," he said to me with special emphasis, "that France is fully determined also in future to maintain her ascendency over Italy in the Mediterranean." These statements of Poincaré do not altogether coincide with the information sent us by our chargé d'affaires at Rome. But I have no reason to doubt Poincaré's sincerity, for, although he is often unnecessarily abrupt and blunt, he has never given me occasion to question his sincerity. Besides, it seems to me that of late there has been a decided improvement in the relations between the two Governments and between Poincaré and Tittoni personally.

[1] Which is generally the case.

(218) *The Same to the Same. Letter, July* 5-18, 1912.

In the course of a conversation with Paléologue,[1] I asked him whether the rumour appearing in an English Paper were true as to negotiations between France, England and Italy in regard to an agreement respecting the Mediterranean. He declared that the rumour was without the slightest foundation. A chance conversation between Cambon and Grey had probably given rise to these conjectures. In reply to Cambon's question as to what the British Government thought of the new situation which might arise from the Turco-Italian War, Grey said that he had not given the question serious attention, that it might attain significance in the future, and that it would probably have to be seriously considered.

Cambon's report on this conversation was communicated in the usual way to the French Ambassadors and in this connection a purely academic exchange of views resulted between Cambon, Barrère and Bompard. The French Foreign Office shares Grey's view that it would be premature to approach this question before the end of the war. In regard to Italy, *Paléologue assured me once again that the Franco-Italian Agreement was without time-limit and that there was no reason for renewal or modification.* He said to me that substantially the agreement was based on the following mutual declaration:

"Italy has no objections to the French action in Morocco, just as France has no objections to the Italian action in Tripoli and Cyrenaica.[2] *The agreement contains no other provisions worth mentioning.*[3] *It does not even provide that France and Italy must mutually support each other in the attainment of their object.*[4] The polemics called forth by the English newspapers cannot but be unpleasant to the French government, as it creates ill-feeling among the Triple Alliance and might result in the latter bringing pressure to bear on Italy.

[1] Then under-secretary of the French foreign office.

[2] Which influenced the Morocco affair, since Germany took it for granted that there was some harmony between Italian, German and Austro-Hungarian interests in the Mediterranean.

[3] Poincaré admitted to Iswolsky that "a practical result of this agreement is an abandonment of the concentration of the French and Italian armies on the Franco-Italian frontier."

[4] Paléologue had hardly the authority to admit more than his chief had intimated.

(219) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 18-31, 1912. No. 144.

The Ambassadors of Italy and Turkey have never indicated to me any wish of their Governments to convoke a conference.[1]

(220) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 18-31, 1912.

Barrère did not deny that the idea of a conference emanated from France herself. In his opinion it is in the interests of France and Russia that the war should be terminated as soon as possible. In consequence of mediation having failed, nothing but a conference can serve as a substitute. It is then absolutely necessary that the Entente Powers induce Italy and Turkey to participate in the conference, and this should not be difficult, if the principle is established that the political status of Tripoli will not be discussed. Once the Italian and Turkish consent will have been obtained, an armistice will have to be proposed; this will make peace easier. *Italy's sovereignty in Tripoli need not be mentioned at all, just as the Porte has not yet acknowledged the sovereignty of France in Algiers.*[2]

(221) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, May* 24-*June* 6, 1912.

As I have already reported to you by telegram, Georges Louis has reported here that you do not agree with the idea of a conference. *This has probably made an unfavourable impression upon Poincaré.* I, therefore, made every effort to explain your standpoint to him. In doing so I specially pointed out that you were afraid that yet other questions might be raised at the conference, and informed him *that you have declared to the Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg that Russia in no way intended to profit by present circumstances and raise the question of the Straits.*

As regards this last point, I wish to inform you of what the French Ambassador in London, who had come over to Paris for a few days, told me.

Paul Cambon believes that the conference, when once it meets,

[1] For the purpose of ending the Italo-Turkish war.

[2] Despite which France asserted her own sovereignty over the territory. Such are the *legal* forms of international morality!

will certainly have to concern itself, with the general position of things in the Balkans. *In this case France and England should not only not oppose the discussion of the question of the straits but should, in their own interests, bring this question up to be discussed and settled in favour of Russia. Cambon bases this opinion on his belief that only in this way can the balance of power in the Mediterranean be re-established which, as a result of this war, will be shifted in favour of Italy and, therefore, of the Triple Alliance.* Cambon has explained this view to Poincaré who, however, does not seem to be sharing the French ambassador's opinion, as he still thinks the conference should concern itself only with the Turkish-Italian conflict. On this occasion, however, Poincaré told me that from the standpoint of general policy and in consideration of the new state of affairs in the Mediterranean, *he considers it highly desirable that France and England open the exit from the Black Sea for the Russian naval forces, and that he was ready to support us to the utmost of his ability in the settlement of this question.*[1]

You know already that Poincaré makes no secret of his concern at the Italian operations in the Aegaean Sea. In spite of Tittoni's declarations, that Italy had no intention of definitely settling on those islands, he fears that public opinion in Italy will not allow the islands to be restored to Turkey. The possibility of Mytilene, Lemnos and Chios being occupied is likewise worrying him. According to his informations Germany and Austria also oppose such an occupation, and this is somewhat of a relief to him.

(222) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, May 27-June 9, 1912.*

Poincaré proposes that Russia, France and England should agree on a joint action for the purpose of terminating the Italo-Turkish war. I replied that I agreed with this idea.

(223) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 28-June 10, 1912. No. 158.*

Your telegram of May 27th received.

Have communicated its contents to Grey. Cambon has in-

[1] Which he failed to do when the time came, as the documents show.

structions to make a similar declaration here. Grey replied that he agreed if it was intended to enter upon an exchange of opinions for the purpose of jointly considering the question. He thinks, however, that any action aiming at the termination of the war should be undertaken by all five Powers, as an action of three Powers alone would result in the disadvantage of a grouping of the Powers, *the three allied Powers*[1] *and the two Powers of the Triple Alliance*[2]*; this could only serve to tighten the bonds between Italy and Germany and Austria.*

(224) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 28-*June* 10, 1912. *No.* 159.

After I had spoken to Grey, I continued the conversation confidentially with Nicolson. He spoke to the same effect as Grey. In his opinion it is important that, if Germany,—be it through Emperor William or through Baron Marschall—makes proposals, the Russian and English governments should answer that they wish to consult with one another and with France before giving a reply. I asked him why he thought that proposals would be made by Germany. He replied that it was most probable anyway, and that one should, therefore, consider such a probability. Thereupon we came to discuss the questions that might be raised on the occasion of the conclusion of peace. He mentioned the difficult question of the islands being restored to Turkey, and of the straits. *As regards the latter he declared that England would remain faithful to the promise given by Grey in* 1908.[3] *I told him I did not know that the Russian Government would put this question up for discussion, but that I thought that the question of the closing of the straits for neutral trade, by means of a barrier of mines during wartimes, would have to be settled.*[4] *Nicolson shared this view.*

(225) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 29-*June* 11, 1912. *No.* 160.

Confidential. Cambon has confidentially communicated to me a few particulars concerning his conversation of yesterday with

[1] Great Britain, France and Russia.
[2] Germany and Austria-Hungary.
[3] The promise made by Grey was that he would be in favor of a general review of the status of the straits.
[4] Which was an essential part of the Turkish defense scheme, since otherwise the hostile fleet, after silencing the Turkish batteries along the straits, could steam to the very capital of the empire.

Grey on the subject of Poincaré's proposal, which Grey had not mentioned to me. Among others, a so-called "Protocole de Désintéressement" [1] was mentioned. Grey raised some objections to this, *declaring Russia to be the Power most interested;* it was highly improbable that any Power was thinking of any acquisition of territory; one could not, however, expect Russia to bind herself beforehand not to put any question up for discussion as, for instance, that of the closing of the Straits to neutral trade during wartimes, or even the question of the Straits themselves, with regard to which the London Cabinet had undertaken certain obligations in 1908 by which it still considered itself bound at the present moment. Grey's second objection is the one already mentioned by me.

Cambon told me he shared Grey's view and would support it before Poincaré. He thinks that the change in England in Italy's favour was plainly evident; in France also such a change was making itself felt; *it was extremely important to prevent any step undertaken by the three Entente Powers resulting in a rapprochement of Italy to the Triple Alliance,*[2] especially when the object was to extend the influence of the Triple Alliance to the Mediterranean; this question was of special interest not only to France and England but, he supposed, to Russia also; and, finally, it was very desirable to allow Russia to exert an influence in questions concerning the Mediterranean. *Cambon personally thinks France and Italy should come to an understanding on this last question, which would become impossible if the influence of the Triple Alliance were extended to the Mediterranean.*

(226) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, May* 31-*June* 13, 1912.

I hasten to communicate to you a few points for consideration regarding the proposal which the French Ambassador submitted to me. We consider the formula proposed by Poincaré acceptable with the exception of the words: "The Powers must, above all, ... confirm in writing their disinterestedness."

[1] A preliminary statement of disinterestedness.

[2] Though Italy was a member of the Triple Alliance her loyalty to her allies was such that a "rapprochement" had to be spoken of.

This is hardly practicable and might be interpreted by Germany and Austria as an offensive distrust of them. *Altogether we find that Russia, France, and England must, of course, act together, but that they should not emphasize their separation from the other Powers, since we shall have to apply to them for their co-operation.*

(227) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, June* 1-14, 1912. *No.* 102.

In order to void any misunderstandings, I think I ought to state that Poincaré has expressed no anxiety concerning the stability of the Russo-French relations of whose firmness he is convinced, *but he only dreads the impression which the impending meeting of the monarchs of Russia and Germany may make on public opinion in France; he also fears that Germany will try to utilize this impression to her own advantage. Above all, he fears an unexpected move of Emperor William's in the question of Tripoli with the object of restoring peace. The best means of preventing this he sees in a prior understanding between Russia, France and England.* In this connection, he attaches special importance to the condition that the possibility of extending the program of the conference should be precluded beforehand. For that reason your objections to the words in question have made an extremely unpleasant impression here. If you should consider these words unacceptable, perhaps you will propose another wording while adhering to Poincaré's principal idea. Your view that the divergence of the three Entente Powers from the two others should not be emphasised is also shared by Poincaré. *This has been clearly expressed by the inspired article in to-day's "Temps."*

(228) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazanoff. Telegram, June* 4-17, 1912. *No.* 174.

Your standpoint agrees with that of Grey. As Marschall will arrive here on Tuesday or Wednesday, please inform me whether you agree with the answer which Grey proposes to give to a possible German proposal:

"Before a decision is come to, we must consult the other Powers so that an agreement is established between the five Powers for the purpose of taking joint action." [1]

[1] Exclusive of Italy and Turkey, who wished to end their war.

(229) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, June 4-17, 1912. No. 107.*

The London Cabinet has already accepted the formula proposed by Poincaré with a few unimportant modifications. Poincaré approves of these and now proposes the following final text:

"The Governments of France, Russia and England are agreed as to the conditions under which they can, at the opportune moment, take effective action in favour of the conclusion of peace between Italy and Turkey, and it is their opinion that a friendly intervention of the Powers can only be successful if this intervention is concerned with that issue only which has caused the present conflict. The mediating Powers should, therefore, *confirm in writing their disinterestedness before they enter upon the deliberations. Furthermore, the three governments express the opinion that, in order to reach a peaceable aim, the five Powers must come to a mutual understanding before a common step is undertaken.*" [1]

(230) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, June 5-18, 1912. No. 1146.*

The French Ambassador has communicated Poincaré's new formula to me. *I replied that still I could not accept the words which refer to the disinterestedness. Russia has already proved by her actions that she does not intend to make use of the present war for the attainment of any selfish aims, but the signing of an international act would be construed by public opinion in Russia as well as in the Slav states as meaning, that for the future Russia was abandoning her Balkan policy which is centuries old.*[2] Besides, I do not understand why the French Foreign minister thinks that such an action is going to facilitate the conclusion of peace. It seems to me, on the contrary, that by such a step the Powers will be split into two opposite groups, whereas it is absolutely desirable that all the five Powers should participate in the reconciliation of Italy with Turkey.

[1] A question of *three* powers agreeing beforehand what they wanted to present to two powers, concerning two belligerents. Such was generally the nature of these conferences.

[2] Sazonoff's logic is not quite sound, or his statement not clear; either that or he couples Pan-Slavism and Russia's "historic mission" to some possible development in the Straits after his having surrendered his "freedom of action."

(231) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 1177.

I have just worked out the following modification of Poincaré's formula together with the French Ambassador here: the first paragraph to remain unchanged; the second to receive the following wording:

. . . . . *"are of opinion that the Powers which have in view nothing but the general interests of Europe and are exclusively filled with the desire to re-establish peace, declare their readiness to undertake a friendly intervention the exclusive subject of which is the issue which has caused the present conflict."*

The third paragraph remains unchanged. Georges Louis hopes that his Government will accept this wording.

(232) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, June* 11-24, 1912. No. 176.

Grey accepts the modifications proposed by you. It is useless, in his opinion, to make the formula the subject of a formal exchange of notes. It is sufficient, if the three Cabinets accept it verbally. *Grey expressed himself especially against any publication, because by this agreement between the three becoming known the desired action of the five Powers might be jeopardized.*

(233) *The Same to the Same. Letter, June* 11-24, 1912.

. . . . . Grey immediately told me he raised no objections to your wording. As regards the words " . . . . . are of opinion that the Powers . . . . . ." he assumes that the five Powers are meant here. I replied that I too shared this view. . . . . He told me it was to our common interest that the joint action should proceed from all five Powers; that was the aim we had in sight; under these conditions an inopportune publication of the agreement entered into by the three Powers would only tend to oppose one group of Powers to the other from the very beginning, which would lead to an opposite result. I replied that personally I believed the Russian Government shared this view.

In pointing out that in his opinion it was unnecessary to exchange formal notes Grey was probably guided by the consideration that of-

ficial notes always cause difficulties in England on account of their publication in the Blue Book.[1]

In course of the conversation, Sir Edward referred to the French clause with reference to disinterestedness. He said he had considered himself bound to object to it; *Russia was in possession of an English declaration with regard to the straits; at that time this declaration referred to the future, when circumstances would have changed. Sir Edward added that today circumstances had changed and that, therefore, he did not wish to agree to a formula by which we should have been bound. Sir Edward said he did not want to express the wish that Russia should put this matter up for discussion, he did not wish to induce us thereto, but neither would he put any difficulties into the way if we intended to do so.*[2]

(234) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Sazonoff. Report, June* 30-July 13, 1912. No. 34.

The newspapers lately published a short notice according to which the termination of the Italo-Turkish war might be expected in the near future. I enquired of the Acting Secretary of State to what extent these rumours were founded on facts.

Zimmermann replied it would be premature to talk of an early conclusion of peace, but, according to informations to hand, *the two belligerents were endeavouring in an unofficial way to enter upon direct negotiations with each other; this mutual desire to come to an understanding was in itself a reassuring symptom.*[3] On my enquiring who the men were who were commissioned with such an exchange of views, Zimmerman only told me that *they were probably bankers and financiers, as, for instance, Volpi on the Italian side, who had recently even come to Constantinople.*[4]

Zimmermann could or would not give me any further details. *I only wish to add that his words plainly showed that he prefers a "direct exchange of views between the belligerents" to a proposal to mediate from any third Power.*[5]

[1] Proof positive of what value the British "Blue Books" are.
[2] The documents prove that Grey had no intention doing that. He remained as averse as ever to re-opening the Straits Question with Russia.
[3] The Entente had decided that this was not to be.
[4] Both belligerents were financially exhausted.
[5] A sane policy to which Germany clung tenaciously.

(235) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 5-18, 1912. *No.* 583.

Personal. The communication of the Ottoman Agency[1] *respecting the resumption of peace negotiations has been formulated with the consent of the Italian government by Noradungian; and by Nogara, an engineer. At the request of Turkey, the Italians have suspended warlike measures in the Aegaean Sea during the negotiations.* If these should not have lead to any result in about 10 days, the Italians will inform the Great Powers of the conditions they offered to Turkey. If the Great Powers then refuse to persuade Turkey to accept the Italian conditions, *the war will take its course, in which case Italy will not put up with further restrictions of any kind whatsoever.* I gained this information from an Italian source, and for that reason request you to keep the above strictly secret.

(236) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 20-*Sept.* 2, 1912. *No.* 222.

Grey thinks that the idea of a conference which Buchanan telegraphs about is inopportune at this moment before the termination of the war, and that it might have unpleasant consequences at Constantinople, because an interference on the part of Europe is already being discounted by the political parties there.

Grey considers a conference to be feasible only if complete agreement prevails among all Powers, and especially between Russia and Austria, as to the program and the aims of the conference, as otherwise the conference would only render the mutual relations of the Powers yet more strained.

Turkey and Italy are evidently averse to the idea of a conference: Turkey, because she is afraid she will be ousted from the Balkans altogether; Italy, because she evidently wishes alone to decide the fate of the islands occupied by her, an occupation which, by the way, is considered inadmissible here.

(237) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept.* 7-20, 1912. *No.* 90.

The Foreign Minister told me that the peace negotiations were taking a favourable course and that the friendly advice of one or

[1] Semi-official news agency of the Turkish government.

more Powers at Constantinople might lead to their immediate conclusion. The Italian delegates have been instructed once more to declare categorically that Italy could make no concessions in the question of sovereignty.

(238) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct.* 1-14, 1912. *No.* 262.

The Italian ambassador here has enquired whether the Powers would recognize the annexation of Tripoli and Cyrenaica as soon as the Turks had evacuated these territories. Nicolson confidentially informed me that Grey had not yet given a definitive answer, because he considered it necessary first to obtain the consent of the Prime Minister. In consideration of the extreme importance of concluding peace as soon as possible, Nicolson believes that England will give her consent, but with certain reservations in respect of trade privileges, as in Tunis and Morocco, and that, furthermore, a declaration will be made that the question of the islands in the Aegaean Sea will be decided by the Powers.

(239) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter,* March 12-25, 1912.

Your constant efforts to put an end to the Turco-Italian conflict have been fully appreciated here and I note the endeavours of the Italian Government to restore the closest possible relations with us, as was the case in 1908 *and again last autumn. You know what overtures were made in that direction to my predecessor just prior to his death. At that time the reason for the Italian attempts at a rapprochement was to be found in the ill-feeling created in Rome by the annexation of Bosnia.* Last autumn the Italians were dissatisfied with Austria because she tried to reduce her military measures in the Adriatic and the Ionian Sea. In the present case it is not the result of dissatisfaction of any kind, but the desire to demonstrate to us that a feeling of gratitude has brought the Italians to the consciousness that our aims and endeavours have much in common.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that the Italian representatives in Pekin and Teheran have been authorized to uphold our Legations, not only in official actions, but in every possible way. He emphasized in this connection that he had selected these two cities be-

cause our attention for the moment was being engrossed by Chinese and Persian questions. In a whole series of conversations, he has tried to convince me that the Italian Government is prepared to comply as far as possible with your wishes and that it is attempting to harmonize the general direction of the foreign policy of the two states wherever they are not already bound by existing treaties. In China and Persia, I have been told confidentially, Italy possesses complete freedom of action. Although I do not wish to attach exaggerated importance to these statements, I consider it necessary to advise you of them. We do not know what conditions are to be submitted to Italy on the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1914. *Owing to the Reinsurance Treaties, which are known to you, in the event of a conflict between the two hostile camps of Europe, Germany can no longer absolutely count on Italy;* must we not then assume that she will try to obtain compensations in other countries, where she has had only subordinate interests up to now? The present feeling in the Italian ministry will enable us to derive advantage from Italian sympathies, if this be in accord with your plans and calculations.

(240) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June 7-20,* 1912.

I presented my credentials to the king today and he accorded me a very warm welcome. The king went on to speak of political questions and expressed pleasure at the admirable relations existing between Russia and Italy; only, he regretted that the friendly relations which had formerly existed between Italy and France should have suffered severely in consequence of the lack of good will on the part of public opinion in France. Nevertheless, the king admitted that in this respect a certain improvement had now set in. Several times he laid stress on the great patriotism shown by all parties in Italy since the outbreak of the war; this circumstance would permit the government without hesitation to carry out the work already begun.

(241) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter. June* 5-18, 1912.

San Giuliano has just been to see me. In the course of an hour's conversation, I told the Minister that I had heard he intended to

continue the exchange of views with us along the lines indicated by the obligations assumed at Racconigi. The Minister replied, in view of the excellent relations existing between Russia and Italy, he would always be ready to enter upon an exchange of opinions, but that up to the present he had not entertained such an idea.

"But," said he, "I am always glad to talk to you."

I let the subject drop here, merely adding that, if he had any communication to make to us, he could choose no better intermediary than Torretta, who enjoys complete confidence in St. Petersburg as well as Rome. As for the Triple Alliance, the renewal of which the minister regards as very probable, I said that we considered Italy's remaining in the Triple Alliance an earnest guarantee for Peace—*only under the condition, however, that the obligations thus assumed by Italy would not be directed against us, as was probably formerly the case. The minister replied, he had never heard that Italy had ever entered with anyone into an alliance directed against Russia, and he gave me his word of honour that in any case no clause existed either in the provisions of the Triple Alliance or in any special agreement between Austria and Italy which was directed against us, these Treaties relating merely to the preservation of the status quo.* He could not show me these documents, the cabinets having mutually engaged to keep them secret—personally, *he regretted this, as the publication of the documents would help in reassuring the public mind and in preserving peace.*[1]

(242) *The Same to the Same. Report, June* 19-*July* 2, 1912. *No.* 19.

Since I wrote you last I have had frequent opportunity of talking with Giolitti, the premier, and with San Giuliano, the minister for foreign affairs. Both Ministers repeatedly laid stress upon the patriotic revival which has taken hold of all classes of the population *and which would not allow the Government to conclude peace with Turkey under other conditions than the recognition of Italy's complete and unconditional sovereignty in Lybia.* Both Ministers repeatedly expressed their sympathies for Russia who alone had shown a desire to come to Italy's assistance. I took advantage of

[1] If the Italian minister of foreign affairs spoke the truth, we must assume that the treaty of the Triple Alliance was a very innocuous document.

this opportunity to remind the two ministers that we had disinterestedly kept our promises, but that Italy had up to now availed herself of no opportunity of rendering us a similar service.

"We have no secrets before you; and yet, not only do we not know the Triple Alliance Treaty, but not even the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1902 *nor the Austro-Italian Agreement in regard to Albania. In fact, we are not even sure whether Italy will renew her treaty with France."*

Both replied that the Agreement of 1902 *did not need to be renewed; it had no time-limit and could, as stated in the treaty, expire only in case very considerable changes were made in the documents of the Triple Alliance, and then only after the French government will have been officially advised by the Italian government to that effect. Consequently, there could be no question of a renewal of the Agreement of* 1902, *and France, who was very well aware of this, need entertain no fears.*

As to the agreement with Austria, Giolitti told me he could not recall the exact text and did not know whether Italy and Austria had engaged to keep this agreement secret. Unless such a stipulation had been made, I should be informed of the text. In any case this agreement was nothing more than an *"acte de désintéressement"* and had no secret object in view. San Giuliano told me directly:

"We are bound to secrecy and we would be breaking our word if we submitted the text to you. I regret exceedingly that I am not able to do so, for it is an agreement which guarantees the maintenance of the status quo in Albania and proves our mutual disinterestedness. The treaty contains nothing else and, apart from the punctuation marks, is known to the whole world. We do not need Albania," continued the Minister, "and if she were offered to us as a gift, we would refuse it. We merely wish to be united with Italians who do not as yet belong within the confines of the kingdom; and then we wish colonial aquisitions; an extension of our state at the expense of other nations is not in the least desirable to us." [1]

(243) *The Same to the Same. Letter, June* 29-*July* 11, 1912.

The reception accorded me by all classes here, beginning with the king, right down to the humblest citizen, by both the govern-

[1] And yet Italy was waging a war for the remainder of Turkish territory in North Africa.

ment and the press, has not only exceeded all my expectations but even inspires me with a certain amount of awe. Although they tell me, they are pleased with my return to Italy, I know very well, these demonstrations are due to Russia's friendly policy in the Turco-Italian conflict. Italy, easily influenced, is sincerely grateful to us and expects other services from us as well. For example, the Italians hope that my appointment to Rome signifies a new attempt on the part of Russia to bring about peace with Turkey. They expect the impossible of us and of me personally. Every political event in Europe is connected by public opinion here with the war. They are convinced that at the approaching meeting between the monarchs of Russia and Germany, our czar will try to convince the German sovereign of the necessity of bringing pressure to bear on Turkey. Each day they attach more and more importance to the occupied Aegaean Islands; the Italian press, and perhaps the government as well, already regard it as impossible to restore the Sporades unconditionally to Turkey; they call to mind the various *firmans,* beginning with the year 1552 and coming down to June 23, 1908, which have provided a certain autonomy for these islands. Even if Italy should return these islands to Turkey, all these rights would have to be guaranteed.

They are also setting their hopes upon the effect of the mutinies in the Turkish army, which are said to have assumed very considerable proportions. From all these facts, I draw the conclusion that the Italians wish peace, even though they are not willing to admit it.

(244) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Report, July* 17-30, 1912.

I took advantage of San Giuliano's short stay in Rome to advise him that *"the Russian Government wishes to enter into an exchange of views with the Rome cabinet in regard to Balkan questions and that it calls the attention of the cabinet to the hostile feeling in Montenegro."* I told the Minister confidentially, we had certain information to the effect that the Montenegrin government is of the opinion *that it will be difficult for it under prevailing political conditions to keep the peace with Turkey.* I added that in our opinion, Italy might indicate to the Montenegrin government how undesirable entanglements of any kind in the Balkans would be. Finally,

I added, that according to information we had received, Austria-Hungary had also advised moderation in Cettinje.

San Giuliano replied that he would immediately telegraph to Cettinje in the sense desired. Moreover, he had always warned King Nicolas against rash steps. He did not particularly believe in the warlike intentions of the king. Only once, during the annexation crisis, had he feared some desperate step, but at that time *the king had come to a direct understanding with Austria-Hungary on a financial basis*.....

I rejoined that warlike sentiment was increasing not only in Montenegro but also in Serbia and Bulgaria, and that the temptation to take advantage of the present difficulties and the weakness of the Turkish Empire was great, and that only joint pressure from the Powers could prevent a conflagration on the Balkan peninsula. The Minister replied that he must count on Italy's pacifying influence upon the Balkan States.

In respect of our wish to remain in close touch with the Rome cabinet, he said to me:

"You may assure your minister that I share his wish and shall fulfill it."

(245) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, July* 31-*Aug.* 13, 1912. *No.* 3.

In the course of this conversation Contarini[1] declared that the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1902 was in no way at variance with the Triple Alliance Treaty, but that *the notes exchanged in* 1902 *between Italy and France, contained a clause which stipulated that all questions at issue between Italy and France pertaining to the Mediterranean should be settled not by arms but by means of diplomacy.*

"This editing" said Contarini to me, "might permit perhaps persons who do not express themselves very clearly, to speak of an engagement on Italy's part not to wage war with France."

(246) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, July* 31-*Aug.* 13, 1912.

Our ambassador at Paris reports in his interesting letter of July 5-18, that the rumours of negotiations between France, England and

[1] Secretary in the Italian ministry of foreign affairs.

Italy in regard to Mediterranean questions are entirely without foundation. The same assurance has been given me in the Foreign Office here, whereby, however, fears were expressed that negotiations were taking place between France and England, directed among other things at curtailing Italy's freedom of action in the Aegaean Sea. Bollati directly asked the French chargé d'affaires in regard to this matter. Laroche denied any such negotiations; *there is no doubt, however, that the Italian government do not reckon with a disinterested attitude on the part of England and France in regard to the Mediterranean question.* Germany and Austria probably know of Italy's suspicions and will undoubtedly take advantage of this contingency.

Laroche told me, the German and Austrian representatives in Paris had, on behalf of their Governments, put questions in regard to the two following points:

1. As to an agreement among the three Entente Powers respecting the Turco-Italian War and the situation in Turkey as a whole.
2. As to the Franco-Russian Naval Convention.

In reply to the first question they were told "that an exchange of views had taken place between the three Entente Powers in regard to Balkan questions, but that there was no question of a special Agreement." In respect to the Naval Convention, Paléologue answered evasively, stating in vague and general terms that the present relation of the land and sea forces of the allied states made necessary a personal exchange of views between the leading statesmen, especially when they meet.

I cannot refrain from remarking that the significance of the Italian obligations to France has been constantly exaggerated, a fact mainly due to the lively imagination of my French colleague here, *although I would do full justice to his great ability and to his successful activity. Our Councilor of embassy showed me a letter from our former Ambassador, Muravieff,* (*November* 11-24, 1908) *in which it was directly declared that Italy had pledged herself "First, in case of a war between France and other unnamed powers, to remain neutral, if France were attacked, and secondly, to remain neutral, if France found herself compelled to declare war on a third power in order to preserve her honour and dignity." I do not believe such a document exists. It would directly contradict the provisions of the Triple Alliance and be*

at variance with the general character of Italian policy. I do not wish, however, in the very least to maintain that Italy has not verbally made very reassuring declarations to France, and it is indeed possible that the leaders of Italian policy have given the French ambassador and his government to understand, that they may reckon with Italian neutrality in the event of an unprovoked attack by Germany on France, especially as it would be very detrimental to Italian interests were France to be weakened anew.

Not only at present, but during my activity as councilor to the Embassy, I noticed that whenever it appeared as if Italy were willing to approach the one or the other Power, she always receded as soon as some definite agreement was spoken of. For instance after my arrival in Rome, I have frequently had reason to believe that the Italian government wished to extend the understanding arrived at in Racconigi. This, however, has not proved to be the case, up to now, and I must perforce content myself with the platonic amiability of the leading statesmen here. I have not even succeeded in learning the text of the Austro-Italian Agreement regarding Albania or the Franco-Italian Convention of 1902. *To be sure, even our ally, the French government has confined itself to communicating only the general contents of this agreement to our ambassador.*

(247) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 27-Nov. 9, 1912. No. 351.*

Continuation of my telegrams No. 349 and 350.

In the course of the conversation, Poincaré touched upon the question as to what attitude Italy would adopt in the event of an Austro-Serbian conflict and asked me if I could inform him of the exact contents of our Agreements with Italy. I replied, I could only tell him in general outline that it had been decided in Racconigi that both Russia and Italy would oppose the expansion of a third Power in the Balkans, but that only diplomatic steps had been contemplated in this connection and no obligations had been undertaken respecting an active intervention. *For my part, I mentioned the fact that neither did we know the exact contents of the agreements existing between France and Italy. Poincaré hastened to say that the time had come when both Allies should inform each other with absolute candour in*

regard to their relations with Italy; Italy was destined to play an important part in the events of the moment and this part must be clearly defined in advance.[1] **He added, if you shared his views, Italy might be asked and her consent obtained.**

(248) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, May 22-June 4, 1912.*

. . . . *Contarini, with whom I have frequently spoken in the Italian Foreign Office on the subject of Italy's relations to Austria, regretted that he could not give me the exact text of the Austro-Italian Agreement respecting Albania; he apprized me however in general outlines of this document which has not been made known to any other Power and with which we, too, were absolutely unacquainted. The contents are as follows:*

1. *Mutual recognition of the interests of Austria and of Italy in Albania.*

2. *Mutual obligation to maintain the existing status quo in Albania.*

3. *Mutual obligation to oppose annexation plans of any other Power.*

4. *Mutual obligation, in the event of the liquidation of the Turkish Empire, to raise no objections to the formation of an autonomous Albanian State.*[2]

(249) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Rome. Confidential Letter, Oct. 18-31, 1912. No. 676.*

On behalf of his government, the Italian chargé d'affaires here informed me of the exchange of views between San Giuliano and Berchtold in San Rossore.

The Italian Minister was able to convince himself of the peaceful attitude of the Vienna Cabinet in regard to the present Balkan crisis.

Both Ministers resolved to renew the Triple Alliance without alterations of any kind.

[1] In the diplomatic sense this was either a sweeping assertion or a dangerous admission.

[2] The provision of Paragraph No. 3 was in all respects similar to the provisions in the Agreement of Racconigi, by which Italy promised Russia the same attitude in regard to another Power—Austria-Hungary in this instance. Italy was playing both ends against the middle.

In the Albanian question, they also resolved to adhere to the former Agreement, namely recognize their mutual interests and for both Italy and Austria to forego separate measures in this question.

I expressed my satisfaction to the Italian chargé d'affaires as to this information.

In regard to Albania, I consider it necessary to tell you, *that I heard from a very well-informed source that Berchtold intended to propose to San Giuliano that Austria and Italy come to an agreement concerning a demarcation of their spheres of interests in Albania and that they draw up a common programme of reform.*[1]

From another, very secret source, I have learned, that the British ambassador at Vienna gained the impression from a conversation with Berchtold that the Austrian minister does not reject the idea of the formation of a larger or smaller autonomous Albanian State under Turkish sovereignty.[2] *In this connection Berchtold declared that, when the war was over,*[3] *an extension of territory might be granted to both Greece and Montenegro at the expense of Albania.*

Berchtold replied evasively to the question as to whether Austria would agree to the annexation of Scutari and to a union of the Sandjak with an autonomous Albania.

Although I tell you the foregoing merely for the sake of your information, *I should like to add that it would be very desirable for us, without sacrificing the secret character of this information, to learn more in regard to the true character of the relations between Vienna and Rome respecting the present Balkan crisis and the Albanian question.*

(250) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, Nov.* 7-20, 1913.

....Pichon did not deny that Barrère, the French Ambassador at Rome, has been called to Paris by him in order to discuss the situation existing between France and Italy, and France's further policy towards this country. *I know that in the French Foreign*

[1] Evidently a diplomatic rumor.
[2] Which idea Austro-Hungary and Italy defended valiantly against Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Russia.
[3] The late Balkan war.

Office one has seriously considered whether the moment had not come to demand a categorical answer from Italy, as to whether the provisions of the Triple Alliance in its newest form are compatible with the special agreements between France and Italy. I have reason to believe that Barrère, although not denying Italy's deflection towards the Triple Alliance, wishes to exercise a quieting influence on the French government; he believes that in a short while the present cabinet will resign and be replaced by a new government, which need not be so under the influence of Berlin and Vienna.

In reply to my questions as to how he explained the contradiction that Italy, on the one hand, wished to conduct negotiations with France in regard to a new agreement and, on the other hand, had changed her policy so completely, *Pichon said that this contradiction was absolutely incomprehensible to him, and could only be explained by the traditional duplicity in Italian diplomacy.*

"In any case," he added, "we shall not depart from our waiting attitude."

As I have no direct information respecting Italian policy, I cannot of course judge as to the impartial accuracy of the views of Pichon and his colleagues; I know that our ambassador at Rome, who is for the moment in Paris, makes excuses for the Rome cabinet, defending their policy by explaining that Italy fears Austria and considers it necessary to act jointly with her, in order to prevent dangerous separate action on the part of Austria in the Balkans. Be that as it may, *I must direct your serious attention to the unsatisfactory relations existing between France and Italy. This circumstance is of great importance to us. It is a further factor contributing to the instability of the general European situation and may lead to entanglements; in addition, the French government might be induced to seek a rapprochement with Austria as the secret rival of Italy.*[1] *You know the attempts made by Austria to gain the good-will of the French Government and, still more, that of French financial circles.* These attempts are being continually renewed and it is to be feared that they might now find more favourable soil.

P. S. At my last meeting with Pichon I found him much more optimistic in respect to Italy.

[1] A case of diplomatic vertigo.

"Barrère is of the opinion," he said, "that with patience and sangfroid we shall be able to overcome the present tendency."

I share this hope.

(251) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Nov. 21-Dec. 4, 1913.*

I have taken advantage of the visit here of our ambassador to the Quirinal to advise him of the contents of my letter of November 7-20. As you know, A. N. Krupensky denies the correctness of the French judgment in regard to Italy's foreign policy; more especially, he will not admit that at the recent renewal of the Triple Alliance any amendments were made or supplements added pertaining to the balance of power in the Mediterranean. A. N. Krupensky has written a report stating his standpoint, which I enclose; in this report he calls attention to the categorical statements made by Giolitti and San Giuliano, to the effect that the treaty in question has been renewed without amendments of any kind—punctuation marks included—and that all rumours to the contrary are without foundation.

During one of my last conversations with Pichon, I told him of the opinion held by our ambassador. Pichon replied that equally categorical statements had been made to the French ambassador by the Italian ministers.

"Nevertheless," added Pichon, "we have positive information, not from Italian but from German sources, that at the renewal of the Triple Alliance, a special protocol or a special naval convention pertaining to the Mediterranean was signed."

From Pichon's words, I was not able to obtain a very clear idea, what source of information it was to which he referred, and *I must assume that it is again a question of that "secret sort of information" which the French government claims to have at its disposal and of which I have already spoken in my letters.* Be that as it may, there is no doubt in my mind that Pichon is firmly convinced of the existence of a special convention in regard to the Mediterranean between Italy, Germany and Austria; this fact is in itself important, for it will exercise decisive influence on the attitude of France towards Italian policy.

In the course of the conversation, Pichon admitted that the

tone of the Italian press had improved of late and that the Italian government was desirous of creating more friendly relations with France.

(252) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Sazonoff. Letter, April* 8-21, 1914.

The French ambassador at Rome has been suffering, as you know, for more than a year from the results of an automobile accident which caused a concussion of the brain and has resulted in a considerable diminution of his capacity for work. In consequence, he devotes much less time to business than formerly and sees the Italian Foreign Minister much less frequently; he has often asked me, therefore, to keep him informed of everything San Giuliano may have said to me in regard to Franco-Italian relations.

I gave you at the time a detailed account of my conversations with the Italian minister and, following the request of San Giuliano himself, I also informed Barrère of these conversations.

On the day of his departure for Paris, Barrère tried to speak to me; not finding me at home, however, we arranged by telephone to meet at the station. Here the French ambassador asked me to repeat to him once more all that San Giuliano had said to me, as his memory was failing him. We only had a few moments before the departure of the train, and as it was hard to make clear such an important question is so brief a space of time, I thought it wiser to forward a short confidential memorandum to Barrère at Viareggio where he was to remain for a few days. I am enclosing you a copy of the short memorandum.

Enclosure to the above Letter of April 8-21, 1914.

San Giuliano has stated to the Russian ambassador that the French government proposes to apply the most-favored nation clause not only to economic questions but to all political questions as well. The Rome cabinet raises no objections, under the condition, however, of absolute reciprocity. This does not seem to be the intention, however, of the French government, *for the Paris cabinet appeals to this formula every time the application of it is favourable to France, and rejects it whenever it could be of service to Italy.*

Animated by a desire to restore confidential relations between France and Italy, San Giuliano is doing all in his power to attain this end. On account of his political convictions, as well as his friendship for Barrère, whose position he wishes to strengthen, the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs is willing to comply with any just wishes on the part of France and even to make certain concessions to her which would facilitate a *rapprochement* between the two governments and the two countries. *But he reproaches France with having forgotten that Italy of today is no more that of fifty years ago. Half a century ago, when France was a very great Power and Italy almost a quantité négligeable, Paris was accustomed to look on Italy as not being entitled to equal rights. Today the Kingdom occupies a very different position in the world* [1] and plays a very different rôle in the Mediterranean. This fact alone is sufficient to diminish the disparity between the two countries and to allow Italy to speak with France on terms of equality. San Giuliano maintains that French public opinion does not yet realize this, and that until it does, all the sincere endeavours on the part of the Italian government, to restore cordial relations with France, will remain without result.

But the minister is convinced that the day France realizes the fact that the Great Power, Italy, has ceased to occupy a position subordinate to France, the obstacles in the way of a *rapprochement* between the two nations will be removed. As far as the questions still pending are concerned—the jurisdiction in Tunis and the capitulations in Morocco—the first has been almost settled, and the second, although quite difficult, has also taken a favourable turn.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Russian ambassador, although he is naturally not authorized to enter more closely into the considerations cited by San Giuliano, called the attention of the Italian minister to the fact that if the same confidence is not shown towards Italy by France as in former days, *the reason for this is, that the Paris cabinet suspects that changes have been made in the Triple Alliance Treaty or that new provisions are contained in it directed against France and her position in the Mediterranean. The minister replied, he had stated in parliament and to Barrère personally* (Tit-

[1] Gained under the aegis of the Triple Alliance and the great statesmanship of Signor Crispi.

toni had also been authorized to make the same statement in Paris) *that the Triple Alliance had been renewed without so much as a comma being altered.* No supplementary provisions had been agreed on by Italy and her Allies, and the agreements between France and Italy were still valid. *The minister added that French suspicion was based on certain proofs which France believed to have in her possession. These so-called proofs, however, could not be anything but mere common forgeries.* If these statements were not sufficient, and if the French government so desired, the minister was willing to repeat them in parliament and to have an interpellation made for this purpose.

In reply, the Russian ambassador merely stated that all this was probably known in Paris, but that the statements of the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs were not considered categorical enough.

(253) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Report, Feb.* 11-24, 1914.

At a social gathering I had the opportunity of holding a very interesting conversation with De Martino, the secretary general of the Foreign Office. *We discussed Italy's policy towards Austria and Russia.* I did not conceal from him the fact that, since my return to Italy, my personal views had unfortunately undergone a change quite different from what I would have wished. On my arrival, I had hoped that, in the question of a *rapprochement* between Russia and Italy, the first step would have been taken and that there would be nothing for me to do but to continue in the way laid down in 1908. The understanding reached at Racconigi, in respect to Russia's attitude in the event of war between Italy and Turkey, was favourably received and I was encouraged in my hopes by various expressions of public opinion.

But my expectations were not fulfilled. In almost no questions of a political nature had Italy espoused the cause of Russia; on the contrary, she had constantly given support to Austria. This of course had not remained unnoticed in St. Petersburg, where quite rightly one had expected a markedly friendly attitude towards us, especially in cases where Italian interests were not directly involved.

Martino replied that, to the great regret of the Rome cabinet also, a change had indeed been observed in the relations between Russia and Italy. This, however, could only be a temporary phenomenon. *He pointed to the relations existing between Italy and England and said he did not doubt—this conviction is also shared by San Giuliano—that if the questions of the Albanian frontier and the Albanian loan were once adjusted, a still closer rapprochement between Italy and Russia would take place, especially in case of war.*

"We could not," continued Martino, "leave Valona and the Straits of Corfu to Greece. Though against our wish, and very unwillingly, we had to proceed jointly with Austria, not only on account of our Alliance, but, first and foremost, *because Italy could not possibly allow Austria complete freedom of action.* Our object was to exercise a restraining influence on Austria-Hungary and thus avoid a war which would have been a great menace to us, independently of whether we had to take part in it or not. Our war with Turkey, and the questions arising out of it, occupied our entire attention, the more so since we knew that Austria would determine on war if her wishes in regard to the frontier of Montenegro, Albania and Serbia were not fulfilled. Our entire policy was directed towards exercising a restraining influence on Austria and thus avoiding a war.

"But you know that in many questions we do not agree with Austria. We wished an internationalisation of Albania. The same is also the case today, and I repeat, after the Albanian question has been definitively settled, our relations with Russia will assume another character."

In reply to my remark, that I must reproach myself for having pointed out to Italy the course she pursued at Racconigi, he said, there was no reason for me to make excuses for myself, it was not I, but conditions, that were responsible; Italy had not really altered her policy at all; she wished, as sincerely as ever a *rapprochement* with us; like San Giuliano he could only repeat, that, after the solution of the Albanian question, a closer co-operation between Russia and Italy in all political questions would result as a matter of course.

De Martino, an extremely prudent man, talks but little as a rule, and generally I have been able to learn more from San Giuli-

ano about Italian policy than from him. I was all the more astonished at his talkativeness on this occasion, and I believe for this reason that I must inform Your Excellency of the substance of our conversation.

(254) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, June* 19-*July* 2, 1914.

Tittoni, the Italian Ambassador here, whom I have seen but seldom in the course of the last year, has called on me and made the following statement:

As a participant in the Russo-Italian Agreement of 1909 in Racconigi, he, Tittoni, was convinced of the necessity of Italy's remaining in the Triple Alliance, but at the same time he was convinced that this was no obstacle to close relations between Italy and Russia. For this reason he had not always been able, on the occasion of the last complications in the Balkans, *to agree with the policy of San Giuliano, as the minister's policy had become all too Austro-German in its orientation.*

Tittoni was convinced that Italy had acted rightly in agreeing to the formation of an independent Albania, as Austria could only be restrained in this way from an active advance against Belgrade and Saloniki; but in the present phase she was not justified in identifying Italian interests in Albania with those of Austria-Hungary. Tittoni believes that in Albanian questions, the Italian Government should, on the one hand, endeavour to obtain an internationalization and, on the other hand, seek as many points of contact as possible with Russia. During his last stay in Rome, Tittoni had the opportunity of expressing this view to the new premier, Salandra, his close friend and political partisan, and he discovered that the premier fully shares his view.

Tittoni has been considering what points of contact might be found between Russia and Italy in the Albanian question and has come to the realization that the Adriatic railway is such a point of contact. This question, settled in principle at the London Conference, has been forgotten in the midst of the confusion in Albania. Tittoni believes Russia and Italy might make the first new move and in this way emphasize their solidarity in Albanian questions. This is Tittoni's personal idea, which he has not yet brought

up for discussion in Rome; if it should be approved, however, in St. Petersburg, he has no doubt but that Salandra would be glad to give his approval.

In my answer, I was extremely cautious—intentionally—and gave no expression of opinion in regard to Italy's policy or as to the acceptabilty of his proposal. I confined myself to promising him that I would advise you of the above.

BOOK TWO

THE ENTENTE AND AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

INTRODUCTION TO BOOK TWO

THE ENTENTE AND AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

(November 1908—June 1914)

The Berlin Conference of 1878 sowed the seeds of more wars than any other similar event, though it was called for the purpose of regulating, by the means of peace, the affairs of the Balkan peoples as much as possible. The conference did a great deal of good, but it also left ample room for future difficulties—left that room, because the governments participating did not have the courage to go to the core of things.

To Austria-Hungary was left the civil administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the right to occupy later on the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar. In 1908 the Vienna government was ready to make the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina complete, eliminating what few traces of Turkish sovereignty there still attached to these "crownlands," by an agreement with the Sultan of Turkey, Abdul Hamid, who like his fellow monarch in Persia, had done little besides running his country into the ground.

Before taking the final step in the annexation, the Vienna government decided to sound the Powers as to their attitude. Berlin was willing. The British government, being not unfriendly to Austria-Hungary, also had no objection, and in France it was felt that the Balkan was too far away to be a problem.

But there was Russia. Count Aehrenthal, the Austro-Hungarian minister of foreign affairs and minister of the imperial court, decided to sound M. Iswolsky, the Russian minister of foreign affairs, who was then on his way to his villa on Lake Tegern.

Aehrenthal was a shrewd and enterprising man. He asked Count Berchtold, then Austro-Hungarian ambassador at St. Petersburg, and also on his summer vacation, to invite M. Iswolsky to his hunting lodge in Buchlau, Bohemia.

Everything possible was done to entertain the distinguished guest, and at the proper moment Counts Aehrenthal and Berchtold took the Russian minister of foreign affairs into their confidence. They told the astounded Russian that they wanted to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina as a matter of making the last days of Emperor Francis Joseph a little brighter than they were. M. Iswolsky did not know what to make of all this, but gave his consent, feeling that one of these days Austria-Hungary would avail herself of her privileged position in the two Turkish provinces anyway and carry into effect what the Berlin Conference had promised her.

Later, M. Iswolsky began to think this thing over. At St. Petersburg he was taken to task by the Grand-Ducal war party, and being a Pan-Slav by conviction, and a man of much influence in Paris and London, he decided to bring the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the attention of the Powers in such a manner that he might be able to fish in troubled waters.

The Russian government had no idea of annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina itself. But it had taken to its heart the Slav kingdom of Serbia, and looked upon it as its special protégé. For some years, the Russian *fiscus* had paid an annual subsidy to King Peter, so that he might maintain a court, which the revenues of the neglected country could hardly do, especially since Austria-Hungary had for some years waged a tariff war upon it. Serbia, then, set up a claim for compensations, though at first her government was inclined to demand that Bosnia and Herzegovina be given complete political independence. To either demand Austria-Hungary turned a deaf ear.

M. Iswolsky had considerable trouble getting Sir Edward Grey sufficiently interested in the claims of the Serbian government. That institution was not in high favor at the Court of St. James. The British government had been the very last to recognize King Peter, upon whom popular opinion placed a goodly share of responsibility for the assassination of King Alexander and Queen Draga. Moreover, the Karageorgewitch family enjoyed not the

best of reputations, due mainly to the fact that the original Black George, a Bosnian gypsy, had made war as hard upon the Slav peasants as upon the Turkish *begs* and military and police forces. The Obrenowitches were considered more eligible as members of Europe's royal society, even though they were not beyond criticism.

In the end, Sir Edward Grey had to listen to M. Iswolsky. Once more the Entente was at stake. Out in Persia close liaison had been taken with the Russians, and, when all failed, the Russian government managed to launch a few rumors that alleged Russia's intention to return to the policy of yore in regard to India. Thus, the British government was induced to favor M. Iswolsky's idea as to the calling of a conference by all the Powers to which Austria-Hungary was to submit her case in Bosnia and Herzegovina regardless of the agreement reached with the Sultan of Turkey, who was the most interested party, seeing that he surrendered the last vestige of right he had in the two provinces.

Count Aehrenthal would not listen to the proposal, and Berlin supported him in that, though not as effectually as was expected in Vienna. The French government was willing enough to please the Russian government, but in those days of the *internationale* and M. Juarés that was not easy. France had some sore economic problems on her hands, and the French public could not be converted to the view that an interest of the Republic was being jeopardized by not getting mixed up in an affair that did not directly concern it. The French people, by and large, were rather Austrophile in those days.

M. Iswolsky set every lever in motion to have the conference. It was a difficult situation to handle. With London and Paris averse to making an issue of what had been taken for granted since 1878, he had to keep things moving rapidly. Meanwhile, the Serbs were hampering him not a little. Knowing that the big brother in the North was committed to the aggrandizement of Serbia, they clamored for the immediate realization of their wishes—did that to such an extent that M. Iswolsky had to counsel restraint repeatedly.

The German government suggested that the difficulty be settled by an exchange of notes. At first none would listen to this, but in the end the suggestion was adopted, M. Iswolsky being the

first to do that, to the surprise of Paris, if not that of London. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina remained in *status quo*, and when the smoke had cleared it was found that, unbeknown to any part of the European public, a war had been very near at hand. Had it not been that the French government had little time for any but domestic affairs, Europe would have gone to war over a question that interested none but Serbia and Austro-Hungary, and, through Serbia, Russia, the government of which had set itself up as the protector of all the Slavs.

Much has been said of the Balkan as the breeder of troubles—the cradle of war clouds. The Bosnian crisis affords an ample illustration of the manner in which the peninsula kept all of Europe anxious and disturbed.

It was not the state of Serbia, any more than Bulgaria, that upset periodically the security of Europe. It was Russian ambition, Pan-Slavism and the "historic mission" of the Muscovite which was responsible. Serbia was used as the political irritant ever since Austro-Hungarian influence waned in the little kingdom, and M. Hartwig, the Russian minister at Belgrade, had ever the power and enterprise to create a situation.

The Austro-Hungarian government did little enough to alleviate this condition. For the sake of argument it considered itself as much of a Slav state as Russia, and as such it would put up claims similar to those Iswolsky and Sazonoff presented. It had as a background for this the fact that proportionately the Dual Monarchy was the habitat of as many Slavs as could be found in the Russian empire, taking into account that the Poles and Ukrainians were kept under Russian rule by coercion and force. The real difference was, that while the Balkan policy of Russia was Pan-Slav and imperialistic in behalf of Russia's interest and "historic mission," the policy of Austria-Hungary was calculated to promote the aggrandizement of the Hapsburg empire.

Though the Austro-Hungarians and Serbs had been friendly neighbors for twenty-five years, while Serbia was ruled by the Obrenowitches, Iswolsky succeeded in making the people of the Balkan and the world believe that Austria-Hungary had made the incorporation of all the Slavs in the peninsula the major part

of her foreign program, ignoring entirely that in Vienna and Budapest they feared that the further incorporation of Slavs would upset the fine balance that had to be maintained to avoid reaching the maximum of friction which even then threatened to split the monarchy into at least two parts—the Austrian and the Hungarian. So grave and pressing was this situation that Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir presumptive, devised a political program which was to make a triunism of the dual monarchy, with the Slavs forming the third entity. Iswolsky was not ignorant of these facts and feared them, but it served his purpose to ignore them. The thing he was constantly afraid of was that autonomy for the Austro-Hungarian Slavs would remove them from reach of the Russians and strengthen the Danube State. In Paris and London, where more attention was given to the political actualities behind the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question, these things were given a certain amount of recognition, and when finally it had been decided to order the preliminaries of a mobilization, it was not a question of preventing the annexation of the two provinces, but one of testing the strength of the Triple Alliance, whose solidarity had been demonstrated.

Defeated in this move, Iswolsky set to work to effect better relations between the Balkan states. Serbia was now completely in his hands. The Russians slighted no opportunity letting the Serbs feel that, without the intervention of the "father of Slavs" at St. Petersburg, they would soon pass under the dominion of the Hapsburgs. Serbia was willing to negotiate directly with the Austro-Hungarian government, but Iswolsky found means and arguments that prevented this in all questions of importance. The Serbian government thus fell completely under the sway of the Russian foreign office.

The Bulgarians had been less tractable, despite the fact that relatively they owed more to Russia than did Serbia. Bulgaria had been made an autonomous principality by Czar Alexander II, and though the equestrian statue of the Czar *Oswoboditel* looked into the Sobranje at Sofia, as a reminder of what Russia had done for the Bulgars, this people began to feel independent of Russia, all the more so after the Austro-Hungarian government had induced the Sultan of Turkey to relinquish the last shred

of suzerainty over Bulgaria. Nor were they fooled by the inuendos of Iswolsky and Sazonoff that Russia had much to do with making Bulgaria really a recognized nation among the nations.

The Pan-Slavs of Russia wanted to combine the Balkans into a single political group, and they set out to do it. Before long, they had effected a rapprochement between the Serbs, Montenegrins and Bulgars, and presently the Greek government was ready to join the Balkan League. By those who formed the league, it was understood, naturally, that it was directed against Turkey, though that was not the immediate plan of Russia. To that extent, the combination had gotten out of the hands of Sazonoff, who by then had succeeded Iswolsky to the office of Russian minister of foreign affairs.

Meanwhile, efforts had been made by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian governments to reach an understanding on the Balkan question, to at least the extent of restoring normal diplomatic relations, which the Bosnian crisis had all but severed. The attempt was made to find a *modus operandi* for the preservation of the *status quo* in the peninsula. But these efforts were of little avail. Lacking sincerity, the negotiations were mere matters of form. Russia had made the Agreement of Racconigi with Italy, and Italy had come to an understanding with Austria-Hungary. The Agreement of Racconigi was to prevent the Austro-Hungarians gaining more territory in the Balkan, and the Italo-Austro-Hungarian understanding was directed against Russia, though primarily it guaranteed the interests of Italy along the eastern shore of the Adriatic, more especially on the cost of Albania. Italy had hopes and missions of her own in that part of the peninsula and did not want to see them frustrated by the annexation of Albania by Serbia, Montenegro and Greece. While one of the understandings of Italy was anti-Austrian and pro-Russian, the other was anti-Russian and in a sense pro-Austrian.

Intrigue was carried further, however. While effecting the Balkan League, the Balkan Slavs, especially the Bulgarian government, gave the Turks to understand that a rapprochement was desirable, and while promoting Pan-Slavism in the Balkan as a force against Pan-Islamism, of which latter there was no question

at all except as a political argument, the Russian government also tried to get on a friendly basis with the Turks. Not satisfied even with that, Sazonoff did his best in London to get Sir Edward Grey's consent to a revision of the Straits question in favor of Russia—a revision which could be carried out only at the expense of the Turk, against whom all Europe was using pro-Christian arguments that were devoid of real interest in the Christian elements in the Ottoman empire.

Diplomatic daring and double-dealing went even further when Italy had occupied Cyrenaica and Lybia and cast longing eyes upon certain islands in the Aegean Sea, among others, Mytilene. Though the Agreement of Racconigi caused the Italians to believe that Russia would look favourably upon Italian occupation of some of these islands, Sazonoff was among the first to discourage this plan in London and Paris. It was a season of diplomatic malfeasance, and every wire that was pulled had but the one end, to wit: The preservation and further cementing of the Entente. The main political objective of Russia, France and Great Britain was the reduction of Germany, a country which stood aloof, unless required by treaty obligations to come to the assistance of Austria-Hungary, or when her commercial interests in Southwest Asia dictated action.

International finance played a great rôle in these machinations. For instance, when Bulgaria required money for the construction of a railroad that was urgently needed, the French government insisted that the loan could be quoted on the French bourses only if Bulgaria promised that henceforth her foreign policy would be favorable to the Entente. The promise was made and the money obtained, with Russian diplomatists acting as go-betweens. Turkey, chronically hard-up as she was, had to attach to every foreign loan compensations which made further inroads not only upon her sovereignty but also upon the economic system of the country. France played the principal part in this, because her banks and population seemed to produce ready money at a truly phenomenal rate. The fact that no foreign loan could be floated in France without the consent of the government, made every advance of capital a purely political question. If Russia did not want to have a loan made to a state or group, her ambassador at Paris had but

to say the word. The British government followed a similar financial policy, though in London the control was not as absolute as at Paris.

In October of 1911, Sazonoff re-opened in London the question of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. Russia wanted a "window upon the open sea." Nearly all of the Russian ports in the Baltic were ice-locked for some weeks each winter, and that sea, moreover, was easily made a *mare clausum* by the ever-growing German fleet.

As a matter of fact, the Baltic was a very poor Russian naval base, a condition which was of great advantage to the British. The Russians wanted a great navy, but there were few people who could see the necessity for this. Claiming one-half of the continent of Europe as her realm, and having in Asia an empire of magnificent dimensions and incalculable wealth, having not even the money to develop her resources in Europe, and being not obliged to protect a foreign commerce overseas, Russia had no legitimate excuse to want a great navy.

British statesmen felt that the building of a powerful Russian war fleet was directed at England. There was India. Whatever Russia did was thought a measure directed against the British Indian empire. The "former relations" of Russia to Great Britain, of which there is considerable mention in these documents, refer to the hostile contact Great Britain and Russia had had along the frontiers of Northern India. In London, then, the belief was ingrained, and not without justification, that the development of the Russian war fleet was a measure inimical to British interests. With Germany building a large fleet, Russia had to be discouraged from doing the same thing, if Great Britain was not to be rendered insolvent as the result of further appropriations for naval armament to meet the naval programs of Germany and Russia. It was necessary, then, that London improve its relations with St. Petersburg more and more, while listening with sympathy to Russia's claim for an "open window." There was no assurance that the German and Russian navies would never act in concert against Great Britain.

On October 18th, 1908, Sir Edward Grey sent a memorandum to the Russian foreign office in which he expressed a willingness to have the Powers discuss the Straits question. Exactly three years

later, Sazonoff—a most restless diplomatist—reminded him of that, after having obtained an encouraging opinion from M. Pichon, the French minister of foreign affairs. To get the project flatly on the table, Sazonoff had broached the matter to the Turkish government, without getting very far, however. The Turk had come to learn what the fine words of Russian and European diplomatists meant, and was wary.

Sazonoff's proposition was new in some respects. Heretofore, the men-of-war of the states bordering upon the Black Sea had been permitted to navigate the Bosphorus, Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles only with the express permission of the Turkish government, and with Turkish officials and pilots aboard. The Russian government wished to change that, and proposed in London that Sir Edward Grey use his efforts to obtain for Russia the consent of the Turks and the other Powers to permit Russian men-of-war to navigate the Straits and the intervening sea at will, in both directions, though without stoppage.

Sir Edward Grey, ever ready to please the Russians, listened to the proposal, but said that his action in the matter would be in the sense of the memorandum of 1908, to which sanction had been given by the British cabinet. But there his interest ended.

To give the Russians the rights they wanted in the straits was a matter that had to be well considered. Russia would not always be a member of the Entente, and the speeches in the British parliament of the period leave no doubt in regard to the fears of the political opponents of Grey—that Russia might and would cease to be a friend of England's shortly after she had obtained the privilege of taking her war fleet in and out of the Black Sea at will.

It was argued that this would prove a fatal condition so far as the British empire was concerned. The Russian Black Sea fleet at that moment was no danger, to be sure, but the size and equipment of that fleet were the result of its being compelled to confine its radius to the Black Sea—a relatively small body of water, on the shores of which dwelt peoples that had no intention of measuring their strength with the Russians. Opening the high seas to this fleet would have been the incentive to make it what Russia wanted it to be—the first navy in the Mediterranean. Though the British base at Gibraltar might have been the means

of preventing the Russian fleet from attacking the British home fleet and ports, there was the fact that a large Russian navy was a menace to the Suez Canal—Great Britain's highway to India, East Africa, the Far East, and Australia. Moreover, it was feared in Great Britain that with the Sea of Marmara the magnificent naval base of the Russians in the Mediterranean, the Russian Baltic fleet would also be developed, rendering Gibraltar absolutely useless in that event.

Sazonoff tried to get the Austro-Hungarian government interested in his plan regarding the Straits, using the theory that for freedom of action in the Western Balkan, Vienna ought to give St. Petersburg freedom of action at the Straits, which latter was to be made a condition of the proposed Russo-Turkish agreement. Germany also was approached, so that the action constituted really a basis upon which Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg could meet—to the detriment of Great Britain.

The outbreak of the Balkan war in 1912 put an end to this endeavor.

The Balkan League was now ready to settle issues and scores with the Turk. The war in Tripoli had further weakened the military and financial resources of the Ottoman government, upon which excessive demands had been made for many years by other wars and the policing of a vast empire composed of peoples that had little regard for one another. The Albanians rose in revolt, after getting the arms for this from the Montenegrins, and a border incident, produced for the purpose, as is the time-honored practice in the Balkan, furnished the necessary pretext for the Balkan Allies to attack the Turks.

With the exception of Essad Pasha, the heroic defender of Yanina, the Turkish commanders made a poor job of the work before them, though it must be said that they were badly handicapped by their lines of communication with the Turkish bases being cut by the Bulgars and Greeks immediately.

Within a few days, the last of Turkish authority had vanished from the Balkan; Adrianople was besieged by the Bulgarians, and Bulgar divisions penetrated Thrace as far as the Sea of Marmara, north of the fortifications of Bulair on Gallipoli.

The Balkan Allies were now ready to divide the booty in ter-

ritory. The secret agreement they had among themselves is here reproduced and shows that even Albania was to be divided among Serbia, Montenegro and Greece. Out of this came another possibility of a general European war.

The question which Sazonoff had to take in hand immediately was the preventing of Constantinople falling into the hands of the Bulgars. The Balkan Allies had shown that they had aspirations of their own. Once upon a time, the Serbian empire had comprised virtually all of the Balkan. The Bulgarian empire had been of like extent, and the Greeks had not yet forgotten the glory of Alexander of Macedonia.

These aspirations were not compatible with Russia's "historic mission."

That mission was to make Constantinople the capital of the Greater Russia of the Pan-Slavs and Muscovite imperialists. Though the humble peasant might not know of what country Rome was the capital, he did know that the *Czarigrad* on the Golden Horn—the city of Emperor Constantine, was the treasure of Heaven upon Earth, because it was to him a holy place in which his religion had been modified into the form he knew. In Constantinople dwelt the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox faith, and in the course of time the oppressed Russian peasant had come to believe that his own emancipation could come only with the realization of that Greater Russia that was to have its official residence in the Czarigrad. The thing amounted to a superstition, and as such received all the encouragement possible from the Russian clergy.

Sazonoff was willing to have the Greater Bulgaria extend southeasterly as far as the Enos-Midia line, with the Maritza river forming the boundary as far as Adrianople. But that city itself was to be Russian in the end, for which reason Sazonoff insisted upon the withdrawal of the Bulgarian garrison after the fortress had been reduced by an arduous and expensive siege. It was from this position that the Russian minister of foreign affairs conducted the case.

The British public was anti-Turk and pro-Bulgarian during the Balkan war, caring little for Serbia and Greece. Had it been possible to place the Bulgarians into Constantinople this would have been done, but Sazonoff, well informed as he was by Benckendorff,

knew how to counteract that plan. He let it be understood that the occupation of Constantinople by the Bulgars would lead to the appearance before the city of the Russian Black Sea fleet. Such a complication had to be avoided by London and Paris, and after lengthy negotiations it was decided to permit the division, by the Balkan Allies, of the territories they had occupied, and to allow the Sultan-Calipha to remain at Constantinople—all this in the interest of the political orientation known as the Entente.

There were men in the British government who would have preferred seeing the Bulgars master of Constantinople and the Straits. As a serious, hard-working, and thrifty people, the Bulgarians could have held the city and waterways much better than the Turks, and if too much opposition to this scheme had been encountered there was always Sir Edward Grey's scheme to "internationalize" Constantinople and the adjacent territory and the Straits. In the interest of the mighty empire which Grey represented much double-dealing had to be done, and the documents show that Sir Edward was an adept at this.

In the end, Sazonoff decided that it would be best to preserve the *status quo* along the Straits, in the hope that ultimately he might maneuver for a thorough revision of the Treaty of Paris, which was still the matrix of all agreements reached by the Concert of Europe in regard to the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. He had in this the sympathy of the French government which had to protect the money of its citizens that had been loaned to the Turkish government or invested otherwise in the Ottoman empire.

Presently, the Balkan crisis passed into a new phase—a very critical one, so far as the peace of Europe was involved. On November 5th, 1912, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador at St. Petersburg informed Sazonoff that the Vienna government had renounced "all idea of territorial compensations in its favour." This renouncement covered specifically the Austro-Hungarian claims to the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar. The territory was thereupon divided between Serbia and Montenegro. The Austro-Hungarian government, in other words, had no desire becoming embroiled in the ominous political chaos that was the Balkan just then. The only claim it set up was perfectly logical and justifiable. It wanted some assurance that the annexation by Serbia and Greece of Old

Serbia and Macedonia was not to interfere with the transit of Austrian goods to the Aegean Sea and adjacent territories.

The Serbian government had often complained that the lack of a "window upon the sea" was a great detriment to the development and economic independence of Serbia. In the light of tariff discriminations practised by Austria-Hungary, especially in the years 1905-6, that complaint was justified. There was a market for the food products of Serbia, but so far their export depended entirely upon the railroads, if not upon the markets, of the Dual Monarchy, and experience had shown what this might lead to. The economic depression which seized Serbia in 1906 could not have returned as soon as Serbia was able, as the result of the Balkan war, to get free access to a seaport on the Adriatic.

Serbia was anxious to get such a port, and Sazonoff became the most ardent promoter of the idea. Such a port could be had only in Albania, however, and the Albanians had been among those who had fought hardest for their independence of the Turk, despite the fact that they were Mohammedans mostly. Moreover, Austria-Hungary and Italy had reached an understanding whereby Albania was to be set up as an autonomous state when the moment came. That moment had come, but it brought with it desires of the Serbs and Russians that were at variance with Albanian autonomy.

The difficulties were not insurmountable. Serbia and Albania could have built a railroad to the coast, established a port at a half-dozen different sites, and then reached an agreement as to exports and imports through the port and over the railroad line. That was the view taken in Vienna, Berlin, Rome, Paris and London. But it was not the view of Sazonoff and the Serbian government. Albania could be established, but enough of her territory would have to be surrendered to Serbia to make possible the building of a port on the Adriatic in which Serbia was to be the political and military master.

Sazonoff exerted pressure in Rome, London and Paris. Rome would not entertain his proposals favorably, because she hoped that the new Albanian state, being in reality little more than the hinterland of the Italian cities along the coast, would become a sort of Italian sphere of influence, which would have been hard

to avoid as a matter of fact. Paris remained indifferent so far as public opinion went, and public opinion had to be minded by the French government in those days. London, on the other hand, had a number of special points to be considered.

While Serbia might have gotten an outlet to the sea in that manner, Sir Edward Grey and the parliament had to reckon with the most imminent possibility of this Serbian seaport becoming little more than the Russian naval base in the Mediterranean. Sazonoff was not in ignorance of the British view, which was also the Austro-Hungarian view to some extent. Though he dwelled eloquently on the proposition that a Serbian war fleet need not cause uneasiness in Vienna, he was never able to disguise his *arrière-pensée.* A Russian naval base in the Mediterranean was far from being as desirable as free navigation of the Straits, but it was much more than Sazonoff had reason to expect in the near and distant future. Before Russia could make the Sea of Marmara her naval base, the entire political structure of Europe would have to be changed; that would take a general war the outcome of which could not yet be foreseen. At any rate, Great Britain had to go down in complete defeat, before Russia could realize her "historic mission."

The Serbian government was willing—as it always was—to risk all. Its *chargé d'affaires* at Berlin was instructed to ask the very foolish question of the German secretary of state for foreign affairs, whether a war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia would be considered the *casus foederis,* obliging Germany to come to the assistance of Austria-Hungary. He was given an affirmative answer. This step was taken after Sazonoff had contemplated joint action by Russia, France and Great Britain, and had been given some encouragement by M. Poincaré, then French minister of foreign affairs.

Throughout the month of November, Europe continued on the verge of war. Sazonoff was using the expedient of charging that Vienna's attitude toward the Serbian port question was based upon her desires to grow at the expense of the Balkans, though Austria-Hungary had plainly demonstrated her territorial disinterestedness by surrendering to the Serbs and Montenegrins what she could have kept, i.e.: The Sandjak of Novi-Bazar. Sazonoff and Poincaré both knew that this was a willful misrepresenta-

tion of the fact, but labored for war nevertheless in the hope that the final reckoning with Germany might be brought about. Sir Edward Grey also knew the facts in the case, but worked for peace, because he felt that the fatal hour was not yet come.

War was narrowly averted, and then Sazonoff again turned to the Straits question. There was now the opportunity of his bringing the matter to the attention of the London Ambassadorial Conference. But Sazonoff was soon not very eager to do that, because, as he expessed it in a letter to Iswolsky, now Russian ambassador at Paris:

"We must beware of agreeing to the establishment of any restrictive guarantees which might in future form a hindrance to a final solution in accordance with our interests."

Meanwhile, the Powers had decided to go once more into the details of Turkey's financial status, now largely in the hands of an international board, known as the Administration of the Turkish Public Debt. It was proposed to limit Turkish armaments so that there would be a larger surplus for the civil administration of the country. To this Russia objected, because Sazonoff and his ambassadors feared that reducing Turkish armament might expose the country to attack—especially Constantinople—by the Bulgars, and as M. Tcharikoff, the Russian ambassador at Constantinople, put it in a perfectly frank and brutal way:

"In so far as Turkey is not a large market for the sale of our goods, we are not at all interested in her regeneration."

Such indeed was the general attitude of Europe towards Turkey, though it was left to M. Tcharikoff to express it in this telling epigram.

The London Ambassadorial Conference did little beyond establishing all the more that a general European War was merely a question of months. The apiration of Serbia for a port on the Adriatic Sea was defeated, and it was decided to give Albania the smallest extent possible, so that Russia's friends, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece might benefit all they could.

The Peace Treaty of Bucharest, of July 28th, 1913, settled the Balkan War, and its aftermath, the Serbo-Bulgarian war, to the entire satisfaction of Serbia and Greece. Bulgaria's interests were ignored by Sazonoff, with the result that she had to relinquish

all claim upon Adrianople, and Further Thrace, upon most of Macedonia, and lost a part of the Dobrudja—Silistria, the surrender of which to Rumania, Sazonoff had suggested as compensation for her non-interference in the Balkan war. All Bulgaria was in a rage, and cast to the winds all Pan-Slavism.

Sazonoff was nothing if not resourceful. He promptly engineered for a better understanding with Rumania, and was successful. The operation was not difficult, since Rumania had been given by him what was undoubtedly the best agricultural district of Bulgaria. Moreover, Sazonoff had an able lieutenant at Bucharest, M. Poklewski-Koziel, the man who had done such excellent work at Teheran.

Though feeling ran higher in Bulgaria than it had run in years, the Russian minister of foreign affairs had not given up hope. Bulgaria needed money, and needed it badly. There was just one place where money could be raised—that was France, and in France they now loaned money only to those who had Sazonoff's endorsement. Besides, he worked for the amalgamation of Montenegro and Serbia—a sort of federation that would have given the new dual-monarchy the same foreign policy, and the same army under the guidance of King Peter.

Sazonoff waited until he could tell the French government that Germany and Austria-Hungary would finance Bulgaria if the French did not come to her assistance. Since the Bulgarian cabinet, headed by Dr. Radoslavoff, was openly anti-Russian and pro-German, Sazonoff devised a plan whereby the first payments of the loan were to be made to Czar Ferdinand in person, his hope being that this would end the Radoslavoff régime quickly.

One of the last documents of this series has the following ominous sentence.

"As to the definite request, that the King should pledge himself to form a new Cabinet, we might suggest this later on, when Bulgaria, after having received a considerable advance, will no longer be in a position to disengage herself in a financial way, and only in case the King will not have the opportunity before the end of the year, that is to say before the issue of the loan, to place the government in the hands of other ministers."

I

THE AUSTRO-SERBIAN CRISIS AND RUSSIA'S PAN-SLAVISM

(November 1908—April 1909)

(255) *Iswolsky, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs to Nelidoff, Russian Ambassador at Paris. Letter, Oct. 23-Nov. 5, 1908.*

I am sending you through the courier a copy of my letter to our Ambassador at Berlin regarding our relations with Germany. I am sure you will not fail to recognize the great significance of this letter. It is perfectly clear from all my conversations in Berlin that a radical change has taken place in the general European situation.

Under the influence of political, one might even say historical and inevitable, necessities the Powers have divided themselves in two different groups: on the one side we find Germany and Austria-Hungary—on the other side Russia, France and England; Italy, bound by the Triple Alliance but nevertheless feeling herself at the same time drawn towards France and ourselves, appears to hesitate; Turkey will place herself on the side of those who shall know how to support her new régime and show her a disinterested friendship.

This new situation certainly offers us great advantages in strength and security, but it also embodies great dangers. Emperor William, alarmed by the feeling of isolation, or as he is accustomed to say, of "encirclement," is growing more and more nervous and impatient, as appears from his last English interview.[1]

[1] The famous interview with Dr. Dillon of the London *Daily Telegraph.*

The latent cleavage between the two groups of Powers is finally emphazised most particularly by the adventurous policy of Baron Aehrenthal. Under these conditions the journey of Emperor William to Austria has caused great misgivings among us. It is assured that the military party in Vienna is very warlike and is agitating for an attack on Serbia; the heir to the Throne is at the head of this party, but the old Emperor is opposed to all such attempts. Is it not to be feared that Emperor William will support the military power?

In the midst of all these dangers I am working on the solution of the Bosnian Crisis. My task is rendered particularly difficult by the fermentation of public opinion and of the press; the causes of this fermentation are many and complicated; considerations of internal policy play an important part and if this movement be attentively examined, one arrives at the conclusion that, properly speaking, Russia is at present not in a warlike mood and, though people like to create difficulties for their Government in questions of foreign politics, they are, nevertheless, not at all disposed to wage war out of love for Serbia. But people in Russia do not realize that this noisy movement might call forth illusions in Serbia and Montenegro and might precipitate these two countries in an adventure in which they would remain isolated and in which they could not count upon Russia's material support. I also believe that Belgrade and Cettinje are beginning to realize this; Khomiakoff's telegram has contributed to this knowledge.

In spite of the fact that we firmly hope to arrive at a peaceful solution, we must, nevertheless, foresee the possibility of sudden complications, and it is my urgent endeavour to arrive at the clearest possible survey of the play and interplay of the political forces at the present period. We know the treaty of alliance of 1879 between Germany and Austria-Hungary very well in all its brutality, a treaty which at present appears not only to have been reinforced in a defensive sense but which also seems to have been given an offensive tendency as regards the Balkans.

But what is the exact content of the remaining agreements which constitute the Triple Alliance? *I find no connected documents in my archives, oral tradition has ceased with the death of Count Lambsdorff.* It is certain that Paris is better informed in this connection

and you yourself are in possession of very special knowledge. Your correspondence from Rome during the years 1898-1902 contains valuable references to new agreements between France and Italy, which appreciably influence the articles of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance; but since then other changes have taken place in the European situation—first of all the *rapprochement* between England and France, a circumstance which must necessarily open up new points of view.

I should very much like to learn your opinion on all these important questions. Above all I should like to know how you, with your great experience in European politics, judge of the possibilities which might result from the present crisis. It seems to me that the danger of a Turkish-Bulgarian conflict is thank God obviated. *There remains the danger of an Austrian-Serbian conflict, the most dangerous of all. We are doing and we shall do all that lies in our power to prevent such a conflict, but should it break out, the possibility of a general war would become at the same moment most imminent.*

(256) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Jan.* 15-28, 1909.

Grey informs me that he has declared to Cambon that he wishes to inform the French Government that the London Cabinet has promised the Russian Government its diplomatic support in the question of the compensation of Serbia and Montenegro.[1] Grey tells me he has taken this step in order to clear the situation of every misunderstanding; the difficulties which have arisen during the settlement of the questions pending between Austria, Turkey and Bulgaria, prove, however, *that the Serbian demands must be limited as much as possible in the interests of Peace.*

(257) *Communication of the French Embassy at St. Petersburg to the Imperial Russian Government. Feb.* 13-26, 1909.

The long duration of the Austrian-Serbian Crisis and the uncertainty of the final intentions of Austria-Hungary and Russia, occasion general disquiet throughout Europe.

This condition of things must attract the attention of the French Government in the highest degree. The feeling of France for

[1] Hitherto the British Government had not been in favor of such compensation. It always remained lukewarm to these claims of Belgrade and Cettinje.

Russia, her adherence to the insoluble alliance which unites the two countries and the responsibility which France assumes under these circumstances, make it her duty to enter upon an exchange of opinion with the Russian Government without delay in order to examine with it that line of policy, which, with due consideration of the higher interests of both countries, must be maintained. *The Russian Government will surely agree with the French Government that both must do everything possible to prevent the danger of an armed conflict in a question in which the vital interests of Russia are not involved. French public opinion would be unable to comprehend that such a question could lead to a war in which the French and the Russian army would have to participate.*

Since the conclusion of the Alliance both Governments and both countries have always shown themselves prepared to fulfil their mutual obligations, as soon as their vital interests were threatened. On the contrary, however, (sic) in all other incidents of international activity they have always endeavoured to unite their efforts in the interests of Peace and of reconciliation. Such is the case today and this too was the idea of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when it publicly declared last October that Russia, whatever may be her feelings regarding the causes of the present crisis, could not see in them a *casus belli*. Since then we have not ceased to seek in common for means of settling the crisis to the utmost satisfaction of the Balkan States, since these States are assured of the sympathies of Russia as well as of France.

All steps taken in the interest of Bulgaria which the Russian Government persuaded us to participate in, have been supported by us in a most effective manner.

In connection with the Serbian demands—which, as is generally recognized, are difficult to justify—we have expressed our doubt as to whether it be possible to realize them. But we have joined with the Russian Government in demanding that the question be submitted to a conference. This is in reality the only difficulty for which another solution must be found than that which the Belgrade Cabinet demands with regard to its claims for territorial compensations.[1]

[1] The French Government was not in favor at that time having the Serbian claims submitted to a conference of all the Powers, a point upon which Iswolsky insisted in the hope that it would lead (a) to compensation for Serbia and Montenegro (b) to independence for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The moment has therefore arrived for Russia and France to examine this question in common. We beg the Russian Government to communicate its opinion to us, in the firm conviction that the general discussion of the question by both Governments would permit the present crisis to be solved under conditions which would be equally satisfactory to France and to Russia.

(258) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 11-24, 1909.

It appears to me that the British Government is clearly aware of the seriousness of the situation. This impression is confirmed by all information which it receives from official and from private resources. *In spite of the urgent desire to help Serbia, one is clearly aware here that the efforts of the Powers must be chiefly directed to preserve Serbia from annihilation, but that it would be impossible to obtain, without war, from Austria other than economic concessions for Serbia. Hardinge today communicated to me his personal opinion, that the general situation would be under less tension if Russia would declare in Belgrade that Serbia must count neither upon territorial concessions nor upon full autonomy for Bosnia and the Herzegovina.* Since Austria precisely fears that Russia, and possibly certain other Powers, might support *the impossible Serbian demands,* a step of this nature, undertaken by Russia at Belgrade, would do a great deal to pacify the Vienna Cabinet and thereby increase the possibility of a peaceable solution. *It has been observed here that the Russian Government has not yet replied to the English enquiry, as to with which concessions Serbia, in Russia's opinion, ought to content herself.*

(259) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 14-27, 1909.

Great disquietude prevails here, because the negotiations between the Powers for the prevention of an Austro-Serbian conflict make no progress. *In England at present special importance is attached to the question of territorial concessions in favour of Serbia in the firm conviction that adhering to such a demand must inevitably lead to war.* Here one would really feel disposed to support every proposal which might facilitate a final understanding between Austria and Serbia, but with the provision that the Powers that would act in common must be perfectly clear concerning the fact that

Austria cannot be expected to make territorial concessions. According to English reports, the new Serbian Cabinet seems to recognize clearly that the Serbian demands cannot be realized, and seems prepared to accede to the representations of the Powers.

(260) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, Feb.* 14-27, 1909. *No.* 250.

The communication which the French Embassy has made to me has made a painful impression upon us,—a fact which I did not conceal from Admiral Touchard.[1] Actuated by the most peaceable intentions, we had declared ourselves prepared to adopt the procedure proposed by Cambon, i.e.—to demand friendly declarations at Belgrade and to forward these to Vienna. But Kiderlen's proposal, apparently inspired at Vienna and approved by Pichon,[2] has quite a different meaning. Its purpose is directed towards substituting a direct agreement between Vienna and Belgrade to the common action of the Powers, after the model of the Austrian-Turkish settlement. The tone of the officially-inspired press in Austria leaves no doubt of this. But this is equivalent to delivering Serbia up to the mercy of an Austria armed to the teeth. *A step of that sort, if undertaken at Belgrade, would call forth universal indignation in Russia, nor would it prevent a conflict.*

No Serbian Government could agree to this. It must be emphasized that the idea of a direct agreement between Austria and Serbia is quite new and contrary to everything which up to the present has been agreed to by the Powers.[3] The compensations which ought to be conceded to Serbia and Montenegro, constitute point 7 of the Conference program. Austria has declared herself agreeable to discuss this point with the Powers with the only reservation, that these concessions were to be of a purely economic nature.

In order that all suspicion might be avoided, that Serbia was being encouraged by Russia to make impossible demands and thereby make a peaceable solution of the crisis impossible, we have just telegraphed to Serbia and recommended to the Serbian Govern-

[1] French ambassador at St. Petersburg.
[2] France and Germany acted in common in this matter.
[3] This is not true, since Paris, London and Berlin were on record as favoring direct action between Vienna and Belgrade.

ment to relinquish all territorial claims, to rely upon the decision of the Powers in the regulation of all outstanding questions and to avoid everything which might be construed as a provocation of Austria-Hungary. It appears to us that if one is able to obtain a declaration of this sort from the Serbian Government, the Powers should bring it to the notice of the Vienna Cabinet and request the latter to communicate its own intentions.

Under No. 2, I am communicating to you the complete text of my telegram to our Minister in Belgrade and I beg you to submit the same to Pichon and to inform me of the opinion of the French Government.

(261) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, Feb.* 14-27, 1909. *No.* 251.

No. 2. In reply to the two communications which were sent us by the Serbian Minister on February 10 and 13, I beg to acquaint the Royal Government with the following:

We hear with satisfaction that the Serbian Government remains true to its resolution not to depart from the peaceful standpoint it has assumed, to avoid everything that might lead to an armed conflict between Serbia and Austria and to carry out no military measures at the frontier. We are convinced that the vital interest of Serbia, for whom we have always felt the greatest sympathy, necessarily imposes upon her this line of policy, which is also the only one which does justice to the general situation at the moment.

We have been able to convince ourselves through various sources that the Powers are not disposed to support the idea of a territorial aggrandizement of Serbia. The Royal Government must deduce from this that all efforts to move the Powers to support such demands would remain futile and that Serbia can be assured of the sympathies of the Powers only if she refrains from insisting upon demands which must lead to an armed conflict with Austria. We deem it necessary to warn the Royal Government against adopting any attitude which might expose it to such a danger. We hope that Serbia, as she has just declared, will remain true to her commitments to follow the advice of the great Powers. At the same time, we believe that the Serbian Government must, under the prevailing circumstances, clearly declare to these Powers, that it does not insist on its territorial de-

mands and that it will rely upon the decision of the Powers in all pending questions. These could then devote all their efforts towards protecting Serbian interests.

A copy has been forwarded to Cettinje.

(262) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 14-27, 1909.

It is scarcely to be assumed that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian question will be solved in the near future; our standpoint is the same as before: expression has been given to it in our circular of December 9th; a general unanimity of all Powers at the Conference is scarcely possible; the annexation will not be formally sanctioned; Pashitch's wish will be fulfilled. As to the railway through Turkish territory, we shall energetically insist upon this in our negotiations with Turkey.

(263) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 15-28, 1909. *No.* 40.

With regard to Kiderlen's proposal, a misunderstanding has arisen. Pichon has neither accepted nor recommended this proposal. He has simply communicated it to London and St. Petersburg in order to ascertain the opinion of both Cabinets. *But he himself found the form and manner of the procedure unacceptable, especially the proposed tête-à-tête between Austria and Serbia. A new text containing representations to be made* at Belgrade has just been received here from Berlin. I will send it to you as soon as I have received it from Pichon with such alterations as he may consider necessary to introduce, in case the results of your direct action in Belgrade which he fully approves, should not make a collective action there superfluous.

(264) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 15-28, 1909. *No.* 41.

Continuation of my telegram No. 40. Enclosed find the projected note to be handed at Belgrade, according to the plan proposed at Berlin:

"Resultant upon an understanding, dated February 26th, 1909, His Majesty the Sultan has given his consent that henceforth Bosnia and the Herzegovina shall form an integral part of the territory

of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and His Majesty, the Austro-Hungarian Emperor, has renounced to the military occupation of the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar to which he was entitled by the Berlin Congress.

"The Governments of England, France, Italy and Russia call the attention of the Serbian Government to the new situation, which results from this agreement between the interested Powers and they venture to hope that the Serbian Government, relinquishing all territorial aspirations beyond the frontiers of the Kingdom will refrain from all actions which might disturb the quiet of the neighbouring monarchy, *'and for which the full responsibility would revert upon Serbia,'* and that Serbia will adopt a line of action which will help her to acquire those economic advantages which Austria *'upon the basis of a direct agreement between the two Powers'* is prepared to grant her."

If, in spite of your direct action in Belgrade, a collective action of the Great Powers should be necessary there, Pichon believes that the text which has just been communicated contains the elements of an agreement, subject to the provision that the two phrases quoted in inverted commas, be omitted. This, moreover, is rather his personal opinion, and he is at the same time addressing himself to the Cabinets of London and Rome.

(265) *Iswolsky to the Russian Embassy at London. Telegram, Feb.* 17-*March* 2, 1909. *No.* 265.

I refer to the telegrams of our Ambassador at Paris, No. 40 and 41. The text proposed at Berlin calls forth serious objections even with the omissions proposed by Pichon; the text apparently has been drawn up at Vienna, and the entire first part of it reveals the intentions of Austria-Hungary to have the Austro-Turkish protocol accepted as the definite regulation of the question of annexation. In no case can we agree to this manoeuvre.

We are of the opinion that this protocol can acquire an international significance only after it has been sanctioned by the Conference, and we see no reason to refer to this protocol in the note which has been proposed.

We regard as equally unacceptable the sentence "relinquishing all territorial aspirations beyond the frontiers of the kingdom." No

country, however small and weak it may be, can make such a general declaration.

The Cabinets of London and Paris must also understand that making an Austro-German project the basis of the discussion—however cleverly this project may have been conceived—will seriously affect the possibility of reconciliation.

This will make it necessary for us to propose a counter-project on our part, *which might have been avoided if Jules Cambon had not shown such great haste in taking up the project of Baron Schön.*[1] We do not as yet know the result of our last step at Belgrade and we cannot as yet judge if a further action of the Powers will still be necessary; for this reason we refrain at present from formulating our counter-project. The French Ambassador has assured me that Prince Bülow had declared to Cambon that if the action at Belgrade was successful, the Berlin Cabinet would join the other Powers in order to act in common at Vienna. I have not seen such a declaration in the diplomatic correspondence up to date, and I would gladly be assured that this is in reality the case.

(266) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Letter, Feb.* 18-*March* 3, 1909.

Admiral Touchard has communicated to Pichon the comment which you have made upon the lukewarmness of French diplomacy, especially of the French ambassadors at Vienna and at Berlin, concerning the manner in which they have supported the standpoint assumed by the Russian Government.

Pichon, very much upset by these reproaches, emphasized to me the loyalty and absolute frankness which he has always observed in his policy towards Russia and he hastens to justify the action of the French representatives accused by Your Excellency. As he assures me, they have followed the instructions sent them; these instructions coincide exactly with our intentions and if Crozier, dazzled perhaps by the brilliance of Vienna society, in which he wishes to create a good position for himself, has proved a bit less energetic in form than he should possibly have been, the same cannot be said of Jules Cambon. *He has not ceased to let the Berlin Cabi-*

[1] German state secretary of foreign affairs.

net thoroughly understand that France follows the policy of the Russian Government in this crisis in all points, and that it will uphold in the most loyal manner the treaty of alliance which binds her to Russia. Of this he has been able to convince Prince Bülow so well, that the Chancellor in a recent conversation, in which possible eventualities were discussed, remarked to Jules Cambon:

"You will place yourself at the side of Russia, just as we will place ourselves at the side of Austria." [1]

But it is clear that the German, as well as the Austrian, press has a great interest in thickening the colour and, by referring to the somewhat less strained relations between French diplomacy and the political circles of Berlin and Vienna, to make others believe that France is gradually separating herself from her allies and friends and drawing closer to the Triple Alliance.

On this occasion Pichon gave me the most decisive assurances respecting the attitude of France in case the present crisis should force us to intervene actively in the Austro-Serbian conflict.

"We shall loyally fulfil the obligations of our alliance," the Minister remarked to me, "and so long as I remain at this post, this policy shall be followed. But as this creates an extraordinarily serious situation for the two countries, neither of which wishes war, I have considered it my duty to seek for means by which this danger may be forestalled, and not to have recourse to extreme decisions."

He repeated to me, basing his statements upon all the information which is at his service, that it is chiefly the territorial claims of Serbia, to which she considers herself entitled, which arouse excitement in Austria, as well as the impatience of the Vienna Cabinet.

Milovanovitch [2] has conceded here that Austria would never consent to such demands; *not a single one of the Great Powers showed any disposition to support them.* It was therefore futile and dangerous for Serbia to insist upon them, whilst voluntary relinquishment on her part would have given the Powers the possibility of defending all the more energetically the economical interests of the Kingdom. He believed that a step undertaken by Russia in this sense would be less painful for the Serbians and would have had

[1] Poor statesmanship, if true.
[2] Serbian premier and minister of foreign affairs.

more prospect of success than a collective action of the Cabinets. This was the purport of the communication which the French Ambassador had to make to Your Excellency.[1]

In reference to the proposals of Cambon and Kiderlen, the Minister has neither accepted nor recommended them; he found the latter in particular very little acceptable for us and forwarded them to St. Petersburg and London merely to learn the opinion of the cabinets and without assuming any responsibility himself.

These, Your Excellency, are the declarations and the assurances which Pichon gave me in the successive conversations I had with him during the latter part of last week.

I have no reason to doubt that he is thoroughly sincere in declaring to me that the French Government was firmly determined to fulfil in the most exact manner the duties imposed upon it by our Treaty of Alliance. I hear that other members of the Cabinet have expressed the same sentiments and emphasized that if France should act otherwise and did not fulfil her obligations she would condemn herself morally, and in case the war should be victorious for Russia she would, in a material sense, find herself isolated and dishonoured in Europe, whereas in the other case she would be delivered up to Germany's mercy—for if France should fail Russia, this would mean, as far as the English are concerned, the end of the Franco-English Entente forever.

In communicating all this to you, I must nevertheless emphasize that the possibility of a war is contemplated with very mixed feelings by the press and the public here. According to its very nature, the democratic Republic is opposed to war. Anti-militarism and socialism have in this connection made great progress, but it is chiefly tendencies and considerations of a mercantile nature among the French public and its anxiety for the preservation of its extraordinary wealth, which serve to develop ultra-pacifistic tendencies here. Should France be attacked, or should her direct and easily comprehensible interests be involved, the nation would act. But the manner in which the question is now presented by the press—and a great portion of the press headed by "Le Temps," has been won over by Austria—*"to entangle Europe in a war for the sake of a strip*

[1] The French Government was not convinced that joint action by the Powers was desirable.

of territory to which Serbia has absolutely no right"—such a policy would be criminal insanity in the eyes of the French.

Your courageous step at Belgrade, with which all the world here agrees, serves to forestall this danger, and if, after an answer has been received from Belgrade, the new excessive Austrian demands are no longer maintained, one may justly hope that the crisis will receive a peaceful solution. But apparently an energetic action of the Powers will also be necessary at Vienna, and Pichon, as I telegraphed you yesterday, is fully agreed to come to an understanding with us and the English as to the form and the eventual consequences of this step. He is prepared to attempt inducing the other Powers to take part. Hence one expects further news from Belgrade with redoubled interest here, as well as the decisions of the Russian government which will determine the further dirction of the diplomatic action of the Cabinets.

The French Minister of Foreign Affairs and, in his opinion, also his London colleague,[1] personally believe that the Conference should be called together as soon as possible. Since the agreement between Bulgaria and Turkey will soon be concluded under the aegis of Russia, Pichon hopes that the invitation to the Conference may also be sent in the near future to the Powers.

How will this invitation be received at Vienna and Berlin? This is a question which will very likely lead to difficult negotiations, for up to the present a thorough disinclination prevailed in those quarters against a Conference, unless the latter were limited to registering the agreements which have taken place between the interested parties.

(267) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 17-*March 2,* 1909.

I have spoken to Milovanovitch in the sense of your telegram. The advice which we have given the Royal Government will be discussed at a Ministerial Council and the decision will be communicated to-morrow. From my conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs I have received the impression that the Government is yielding.

Milovanovitch will very likely apprise me in his answer, in so

[1] Sir Edward Grey.

far as I am able to judge up to the present, that Serbia has not the intention of making any categorical demands of a territorial or economic nature, so that it is, consequently, not at all necessary to relinquish the first. Serbia places her fate entirely in the hands of the Great Powers, as she accepts their decision in advance, leaving it to them to decide whether the Serbo-Bosnian question should be settled at once or whether this settlement should be postponed to a more favourable point of time. To take up direct negotiations with Austria at this early date, he does not consider advisable. According to instructions received, the representatives of France, England and Italy have communicated to Milovanovitch, after my visit to him, that their governments share the Russian point of view.

(268) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 18-*March* 3, 1909.

1. Milovanovitch succeeded only with the greatest difficulty in persuading his colleagues to accept the standpoint expressed in my telegram of yesterday. The text of the answer of the Royal Government to the Russian communication regarding the necessity of Serbia relinquishing territorial compensations is contained in my telegram No. 2. If Your Excellency deem that this reply is in accordance with the present situation Milovanovitch would issue a circular note to the Great Powers upon the basis of this text, whereby he would refer to the friendly representations of the Russian Government.

After my colleagues had examined the proposal of the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs, they found this answer acceptable, although they foresee, and not without reason, that Austria-Hungary, which desires to enter into direct negotiations with Serbia, will be extraordinarily dissatisfied with this reply.

In handing over the reply, Milovanovitch begged me to communicate to Your Excellency that his government, in determining upon a renunciation of such serious moment to Serbia, was endeavouring to meet our wishes, *but that he did not give up the hope that Russia on her part would fulfil those obligations which she had already previously assumed, and that she has not the intention of setting her signature under the annexation.*[1] The tone of the press with regard to

[1] Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary.

Austria has become considerably more moderate. The dissatisfaction is directed chiefly against us.

(269) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 18-*March* 3, 1909.

No. 2. Text of the Serbian reply:

"Proceeding from the assumption that the relation of Serbia to Austria-Hungary after the proclamation of the annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina has remained in a legal sense normal, the Royal Government has absolutely no intention of provoking a war with the neighbouring monarchy, and in no sense wishes to modify the legal relations between the two Powers and their attitude of correct neighbourliness. *Nor does it in any sense demand from Austria-Hungary any compensation as a consequence of the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question, neither of a territorial nor political nor economic nature. In so far as the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question is considered to be an internal Austro-Hungarian or an Austro-Turkish question, Serbia refrains from all interference.* Serbia has lifted her voice and has established her standpoint only for the time when, and only in so far as, this question assumes a European character.[1] Consequently, if the signatory powers of the Berlin Treaty concede that the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question has been solved by the Austro-Turkish agreement, or if the signatory powers should for any other reason not wish to express their opinion at this moment, Serbia also, following their example, will refrain from all discussion in the future. If, on the contrary, the Powers should proceed to examine the questions which are connected with the recognition of the annexation and the new form of Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty, Serbia will submit her standpoint to them as to a competent tribunal, and will entrust wholly and without reserve her fate to their high sense of justice.

"As to Serbia's military measures, these have no connection with the Bosnio-Herzegovinian crisis, but are based on general necessities, which is proved by the fact that they have been taken in accordance with a law enacted before the proclamation of annexation. As to the measures concerning the preparation of mobilisa-

[1] To make it that was Iswolsky's intention—fully known to the Serbian government.

tion and the securing of our frontier with Austria-Hungary, Serbia is prepared, even though her armaments are of an eminently defensive character and are limited to the utmost minimum, to interrupt and to cancel them, if Austria-Hungary on her part is prepared to restore the normal military situation on her Serbian frontier or if the Powers will guarantee us that Austria-Hungary will not attack us."

(270) *Iswolsky to the Russian Embassy at London. Telegram, Feb.* 20-*March* 5, 1909. *No.* 288.

I refer to the two telegrams of our Belgrade Minister, dated Feb. 8. The answer of the Belgrade Cabinet appears to us, apart from certain errors of form, to deserve the full approval of the Powers. *We find that the Belgrade Government is very wise and correct in giving up the demand for any kind of territorial, political or economic compensations from Austria-Hungary as a consequence of the annexation, and in relying in this matter upon the decision of the Powers.* We likewise approve the intention of the Serbian Government to direct a circular note couched in this spirit to the Powers. On the other hand, the Austro-Hungarian Government has just declared to us that it had never cherished the intention of asking a mediation of the Powers between Serbia and itself, nor would it in the future agree to such a mediation; it is in consequence most likely that, if the Serbian circular note is directed only to certain Powers and they should make the attempt to bring it to the notice of the Vienna Cabinet, the latter will refuse to accept the communication and will demand that a direct request be made by Serbia.

We believe that the best means of obviating this difficulty would be this: that Serbia should direct her circular note to all the signatory powers of the Treaty of Berlin, including Austria-Hungary and Turkey. In this event it would be necessary to make changes in the text of the Serbian note in order to make it more acceptable to the Vienna cabinet. From our point of view, Serbia must first of all omit the whole last portion referring to the Serbian armaments, inasmuch as this question has up to the present not been broached in the course of negotiations between the Powers nor been touched upon by Austria-Hungary herself.

(271) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 20-*March* 5, 1909. *No.* 292.

Continuation of my telegram of today No. 288.

We should like to submit to the Serbian Government, with reference to the editing of the projected Circular Note, the following observations:

It would seem to us that the first two sentences of the Serbian note need not be altered. The third, fourth, fifth and sixth sentences are, in our opinion, dangerous and might make the calling together of a conference still more difficult. A statement might be substituted for them to the effect, that Serbia will refrain from all interference in a question, the solution of which lies in the hands of the signatory powers of the Berlin Treaty, in whose sense of justice Serbia has full confidence.

The close of the Serbian text which refers to the armaments would have to be completely omitted. If the Serbian Government should nevertheless, insist upon this question this part of the circular note would have to be so worded that Austria-Hungary and the guarantee of the Powers are not mentioned. I beg you to call the attention of the minister of foreign affairs to the foregoing and to ask his opinion.

(272) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 21-*March* 6, 1909.

Grey is completely in agreement with the abbreviated form which you have proposed for a Serbian circular note to all the Powers. In this sense he has already telegraphed to Nicolson.[1] On the other hand, Grey and Pichon will in the near future communicate to the Russian government what steps in their opinion should be undertaken at Vienna in order to accelerate the calling of the conference.

(273) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, Feb.* 22-*March* 7, 1909. *No.* 301.

After taking into account the different considerations which must determine the contents of the Serbian circular note we believe that the note must read as follows after it has been definitely edited:

[1] British ambassador at St. Petersburg.

"Proceeding from the assumption that the relations of Serbia with Austria-Hungary, after the proclamation of the annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, have from a legal point of view remained normal, the Royal Government in no wise cherishes the intention of provoking a war with the neighbouring monarchy, nor has it any desire to alter these legal relations, being determined to fulfil its obligations of friendly neighbourliness towards Austria-Hungary. Refraining from every interference in a question the solution of which rests in the hands of the Signatory Powers of the Berlin Treaty,[1] in whose sense of justice she has full confidence, Serbia likewise demands no kind of compensation from Austria-Hungary as a consequence of the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question, be it of a territorial, political or economic nature, and is ready now, as heretofore, to examine with the Vienna Cabinet those questions which relate to the economic relations between the two countries."

At the same time, please give Milovanovitch to understand that in view of the relaxation of tension which seems to be taking place in the general situation, one is justified in the assumption that the Vienna cabinet will refrain from demanding from Serbia an explanation of the armaments and that consequently any mention of this matter in the Serbian circular note would seem untimely and even dangerous. *If however such a demand be made by the Austro-Hungarian government, the Royal government might, by referring to the circular note aforementioned, inform Russia and the other Powers of this step and ask them for new advice.* It is self-understood that the circular note must be directed to all signatory powers, including Austria.

I beg you to bring the above to the knowledge of the Serbian Government and to inform us of its decision. According to our information Count Forgach [2] has been instructed to negotiate with the Serbian government regarding a commercial treaty. On this occasion Aehrenthal stated that he had no intention of humiliating Serbia and the Forgach mission will in no sense bear the character of an ultimatum. On the other hand it is desirable that Serbia should

[1] So far only Iswolsky viewed it as absolutely necessary that a conference of the signatories settle the question, which at that moment was one that concerned only Turkey and Austria-Hungary both of which were in accord and had complied with the Berlin Treaty of 1878.

[2] Austro-Hungarian minister at Belgrade.

not hesitate so much since the expiration of the commercial treaty renders a provisional extension necessary; as to the economic negotiations between both countries, these might be postponed to a later date. Aehrenthal added that he did not wish in any way to exert pressure upon the Serbian government in this question. In view of this assurance we hope that the Serbian government will not decline the overtures of the Austrian representative and that in the course of these negotiations it will place itself on the ground of normal commercial relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.

(274) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb. 22-March 7, 1909. No. 302.*

I refer to my telegrams Nos. 288 and 292.

In order to avoid the appearance that Serbia wishes to escape from direct negotiations with Austria-Hungary with regard to questions which usually form the object of negotiations between two neighbouring states, it would be desirable to add to the second sentence of the Serbian Note, which ends with the words "political or economic," the words "while the Government is prepared now as heretofore to discuss with the Vienna Cabinet those questions which refer to the economic relations between both States." The Serbian Government would thereby give Europe a new proof of its friendly intentions. It seems to us very important that Milovanovitch should accept this proposal, chiefly in view of the arrival of Forgach who, as the press informs us, is instructed to begin negotiations with the Belgrade cabinet.

Please communicate this to Milovanovitch. As to our other observations we shall communicate them to you shortly.

(275) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb. 23-March 8, 1909.*

Please persuade Milovanovitch to accept the Russian draft. *Serbia need not hesitate to declare that she does not wish to interfere with the question of annexation.* Legally, this is the only invulnerable standpoint and it does not mean that Serbia thereby loses the right, when the proper time shall have arrived, of acquainting the Powers with her wishes. *We, on our part, can only repeat that the act of annexation will in the last resort not receive our signature.*

(276) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Cettinje to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 13-26, 1909.

Measures have been taken to immediately discuss with Serbia a common plan of campaign; either a proposal or some competent personality will be sent to Belgrade.

(277) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Bucharest. Letter, Feb.* 24-*March* 9, 1909.

. . . . . *The Roumanian Minister has given me reassuring declarations regarding the neutral attitude of Roumania in case of a conflict between Serbia and Austria. This question is to be mentioned by you on some suitable occasion in order that an official declaration bearing on this point might be obtained by us on which we could base ourselves in future in case of necessity.* . . . . . .

(278) *Iwolsky to the Russian Embassy at London. Telegram, Feb.* 26-*March* 11, 1909. *No.* 318.

The Austro-Hungarian ambassador has handed me the text of the Austrian-Turkish agreement as well as the copy of a note of Aehrenthal. I have the intention to confirm the receipt of these two documents and to remind on this occasion the Vienna cabinet, that, in our opinion, a direct understanding between Austria-Hungary and Turkey does not exclude the necessity of submitting the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question to a conference of the signatory powers of the Berlin treaty, and to add that, in consequence, we were prepared to begin now negotiations with Austria and the other signatory powers for the meeting of a Conference which would have to examine the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question as well as the other points of the program, which has already been accepted by all cabinets. Please communicate this to the London cabinet and inform me whether it is prepared to give Vienna an analogous answer.

(279) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 26-*March* 11, 1909. *No.* 319.

The Serbian circular note which was handed to me today by the Serbian minister, is, despite some editorial details which have been added contrary to our advice, as a whole satisfactory, as it

should be to every unprejudiced person. Unfortunately, we have ground for assuming that this is not the view of the Vienna cabinet. As I have been told by the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, his government would insist upon another formula which will mention the Austro-Turkish protocol and which will recognize the annexation as a *fait accompli* which cannot further be called in question. Such a demand on the part of the Vienna cabinet leaves little hope for a friendly understanding, for it appears doubtful whether a government could be found in Serbia which would give its consent to this. We on our part have done everything possible to persuade Serbia to moderation. It seems to us urgently necessary now that the cabinets of Paris, London and Rome should bring their entire influence to bear at Vienna and Berlin in order to move Aehrenthal to a more conciliatory attitude.

(280) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb. 27-March* 12, 1909.

Your telegram No. 319 received.

Grey is of opinion that one could not demand from Serbia that she should recognize the annexation before the signatory powers of the Treaty of Berlin had discussed this question at the conference. He also thinks that the last Serbian circular note, especially if Serbia should give her early consent to enter into direct negotiations with Austria regarding the commercial treaty, should satisfy the Vienna cabinet. If Mensdorff [1] here should speak in the same sense as Berchtold [2] to you, Grey will express to him his opinion in categorical form and add that if Austria should still be dissatisfied with Serbia, this would merely mean that Austria could really not be satisfied at all. If such a conversation should take place, Grey will at once inform the British Ambassadors at Vienna, Berlin, Paris, Rome and St. Petersburg.

(281) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb. 28-March* 13, 1909.

Supplementary to my telegram of yesterday. Yesterday the Austrian ambassador communicated to Grey in a conciliatory form

[1] Austro-Hungarian ambassador at London.
[2] Austro-Hungarian ambassador at St. Petersburg.

Aehrenthal's comments regarding the text of the Serbian circular note, and since the recall of the circular note is not demanded by Austria, and, as it is also regarded as a further step towards the peaceful regulation of Austrian-Serbian relations, Grey's reply took a much more conciliatory form. Mensdorff insisted that if Serbia should leave the question of the annexation to the decision of the Powers this would be contrary to her own declarations, that the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not alter the legal relations of Serbia to Austria.

The Vienna cabinet is of the opinion that the agreements of Turkey with Austria and Bulgaria, finally settle the positive question of the violation of the Berlin Treaty and that only the formal sanction of the modifications which have already taken place is left to the signatory powers.

Grey disagreed in principle with this opinion and justified the standpoint of the Serbian circular note, as expressed in my telegram of yesterday. Furthermore, the Austrian ambassador laid particular stress on the form of the answer, which Serbia has to give to the proposal of direct negotiations regarding the commercial treaty and added that Austria could not content herself with the promise of Serbia to "continue" friendly and neighbourly relations with Austria, since the Vienna cabinet is dissatisfied with the present relations and wishes to alter them.

During the conversation, Mensdorff did not once allude to the fact that Austria will demand from Serbia a formal recognition of the annexation. Therefore, Grey believes that if Mensdorff was not specially instructed to moderate the form of yesterday's communication to the British government, Austria-Hungary will content herself with a favourable answer to Forgach's proposals if a general explanation be added to this answer to the effect that Serbia wishes to maintain good and neighbourly relations with Austria. Mensdorff has indicated that the Serbian government might come to an understanding with the Austrian minister at Belgrade as to the wording of this answer and Grey sees no obstacle to accept this proposal. Serbia ought, however, to refuse decisively the recognition of the annexation should this be demanded of her on this occasion.[1]

[1] Such was the thought back of the term "legal relations."

(282) *Iswolsky to the Russian Embassy at London. Telegram, March 2-15, 1909. No. 337.*

In answer to the communication of the Vienna Cabinet which accompanied the Austrian-Turkish protocol, I today handed Berchtold a note in which I confirm the receipt of the two documents and then express myself as follows:

"In recalling to Your Excellency the exchange of opinion which took place in November and December of last year between the cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburg, and with special reference to the communications of November 9th and December 6th, the undersigned regards it as his duty to confirm once more the fact that, according to the view of the Imperial Russian Government, a direct understanding between Austria-Hungary and Turkey does not exclude the necessity of submitting the question of Bosnia and the Herzegovina to a conference of the signatory powers of the Berlin Treaty. The Russian Government is therefore prepared to come to an agreement with Austria-Hungary and the other signatory powers in order to bring about the definite meeting of the conference, which would have to occupy itself with the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question as well as with the other points of the program accepted by all Powers."

Please bring the contents of this communication to the knowledge of the British Government.

(283) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March 3-16, 1909.*

Grey regrets extraordinarily that the Serbian Government in its answer to the Vienna Cabinet has not paid sufficient attention to the advice of Russia and the other Powers and has failed to place itself in a favourable diplomatic position, which might have deprived Austria of every pretext for manifesting displeasure. We have no news here regarding the further intentions of Austria. The last reports of the British ambassador at Vienna refer to a conciliatory mood on the part of Aehrenthal, and Cartwright even believes that Austria, before she takes extreme measures against Serbia, will address another communication to the Powers. Grey believes it is rather probable that the Serbian Government, out of considerations of internal policy, will yield only to energetic

pressure from the Powers. *The British Government will, if necessary, take part in exerting this pressure and at all events will support by every possible means every Russian initiative at Belgrade, which would be intended to persuade the Serbian Government to return an answer in accordance with the wishes of the Vienna Cabinet.*[1] Grey, however, believes that this answer must confine itself to assurances of readiness for peace, to the desire for friendly and neighbourly relations, and to the willingness to discuss, by means of direct negotiations, all questions of a purely economic nature affecting the interests of both States.

(284) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, March* 4-17, 1909.

The standpoint of the British Government regarding the various phases of the Serbian-Austrian crisis, will be familiar to Your Excellency from my telegrams during the last two weeks and from the conversations with Sir A. Nicolson, and I therefore touch on this question only in briefest form.

Everyone was convinced here that the Serbian circular note, couched in the spirit of advice given by the Russian Government, would achieve its purpose. But the dry and negative form which the Belgrade Cabinet gave this diplomatic document has not made a favourable impression on the British Government. In consideration however of the fact that the Circular Note contains valuable and peaceful declarations, Grey had hoped that the editorial mistakes of the Serbian note would be made good by new assurances on the part of Serbia. These should have been to the effect that Serbia wishes to maintain friendly and neighbourly relations with Austria. Such an opportunity was offered when Serbia had to answer the Austrian proposal for direct negotiation regarding the commercial treaty. After his conversation with Mensdorff, concerning which I reported to Your Excellency at the time, Grey was of the impression that such a procedure on the part of Serbia would have satisfied the Vienna cabinet and considerably strengthened Serbia's international position. In this way, Serbia might have been able, under the protection of the Powers, not to recog-

[1] This incessant veering around of Sir Edward Grey was often the despair of Iswolsky and his successor, Sazonoff.

nize the annexation and at the same time obviate the danger of being forced to consider further demands on the part of Austria.

Unfortunately the Serbian Government has not justified these hopes. After Milovanovitch had entered upon an exchange of views with Forgach regarding the editing of the Serbian answer, he suddenly sent this answer to Vienna, ignoring the Austrian minister in Belgrade and, moreover, communicated the contents of this answer to the press, before it had become known to the Vienna cabinet. Quite apart from this, the answer in itself was tactless: instead of friendly assurances—the repetition of the expressions of the circular note which had displeased Vienna,—and instead of a short exposition of Serbia's wishes regarding the commercial treaty, the Vienna cabinet is given a lengthy lecture as to how this question is to be treated in the two Parliaments of the Danube Monarchy.

The British Government is fully aware of the fact that Austria might have displayed more friendliness and conciliatoriness towards Serbia. But it is equally well known here that in order to settle a conflict between two States so different in size and power, the weaker must show more good will than Serbia has up to now been inclined to do.

Although Sir Edward Grey is at present preoccupied as to the future, I cannot say that he has given up the hope of a peaceful solution of the Austrian-Serbian conflict. In his opinion, the future depends entirely upon whether Austria wishes war or peace, *and he sees absolutely no reason for believing that Austria desires an armed conflict.* Apart from the fact that it is impossible to foresee with certainty how many States would be drawn into this war, a war with Serbia alone is not intended by Aehrenthal, since even such a war would demand considerable human and material sacrifices.[1]

The British Ambassador at Vienna has also of late more than once mentioned a more conciliatory feeling in the Austro-Hungarian ministry for foreign affairs, and Grey therefore hopes that Austria will not immediately adopt radical measures towards Serbia. He believes that the Vienna cabinet will now request declarations either from the Powers or from Serbia, but not

[1] Rather obscure. Was it the intention to imply that Austria-Hungary would call upon Germany's army to help her overcome the Serbians?

in the form of an ultimatum, and this will not only give the Belgrade cabinet the possibility for quiet reflection, but will also permit the Powers who are friendly disposed towards Serbia, to exert a moderating influence upon her. Should this hope be confirmed, the British government expects Russia to continue her magnanimous efforts in Belgrade in favour of general peace, in which she may always count upon the support of the London cabinet. *Lately Grey has become more and more convinced that King Peter and the Serbian Government, out of fear of domestic disturbances, will not act on friendly advice, but wish to show that they have been forced into this yielding attitude by the energetic pressure of the Powers. In the interests of peace, the British government would be prepared to take part in such an action, but naturally on condition that this would be approved by Russia.*[1]

(285) *Iswolsky to the Russian Embassies at London and Paris. Telegram, March* 4-17, 1909. *No.* 356.

The German Ambassador here has just undertaken a confidential démarche, instructed by Prince Bülow, a step which for the first time since the outbreak of the crisis appears to point to the wish of the Berlin cabinet to find a means of relieving the situation of its tension. Count Pourtalès stated to me that the German government was prepared to sound the Vienna cabinet in order to learn whether it was disposed to communicate the agreement with Turkey to the Powers and to submit the alteration of Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty for their formal sanction. This sanction might take place by way of an exchange of notes. If the cabinet of St. Petersburg agrees to this point of view, the German government, alone or together with Russia, would request the other Powers to accept this procedure, which does justice to the principle of European sanction which Russia upholds, and which would at the same time permit the latter to speak energetically at Belgrade.

I thanked Count Pourtalès for this friendly communication, and limited myself to remarking that at first glance the German proposal seemed to exclude a conference and gave Austria the

[1] Meaning that Grey was willing to play with dynamite to save King Peter's face.

possibility, once the annexation has been recognized by the Powers, to evade a solution of the other points of the programme and to get Serbia into her power. I added, however, that I recognized the conciliatory spirit of Count Pourtalès' communication and that I would give full consideration to the proposal. It seems to me that this effort of Germany to bring about a relaxation of the tension, must be encouraged and her proposal might be adopted on principle with the provision that the form of the Austrian action must be precisely established and, furthermore, guarantees for the meeting of the conference be demanded. Please communicate the foregoing confidentially to the minister of foreign affairs and should he share my point of view *I will prepare the draft of an answer in this sense and communicate it to the Cabinets of Paris and London before I send it to Berlin.*[1]

(286) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 4-17, 1909. *No.* 364.

No. 1. Sub No. 2 I am sending you the draft of my answer to the Berlin Cabinet. Ask the minister of foreign affairs if he agrees.

(287) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 4-17, 1909. *No.* 365.

No. 2. Herewith the draft mentioned in my telegram No. 1:

"The Russian Government has not failed to examine carefully the confidential communication of the Berlin cabinet, the friendly spirit of which is thoroughly appreciated. The Berlin cabinet is aware of all the efforts which Russia has made in order to exercise a moderating influence upon the Serbian government. If the counsels of the Imperial government have not been followed in all particulars at Belgrade, they have still not remained without effect and the Imperial cabinet is ready to continue to act in the same spirit.

"Unfortunately, the Vienna cabinet is very little disposed to acknowledge the good will, which Serbia, in spite of manifold difficulties, has displayed and makes greater and greater demands. *According to the last advices which have been received from Vienna,*

[1] Though the *démarche* was undertaken by the German Government, Iswolsky, rather than advise the German government to get in touch with Paris and London, decided upon a measure calculated to keep the crisis in his hands entirely.

it must be feared that war has been finally resolved upon there.[1] However that may be, the Russian government has neglected nothing from the very beginning of the crisis in order to arrive at a peaceful solution of the questions in dispute. It will for this reason likewise accept the present proposals of the Berlin cabinet, and if Austria undertakes an action in the sense mentioned by the German government, that is to say, if she should ask the Powers for a formal sanction of the alteration of Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty by way of an exchange of notes, the Russian government will on its part consider it a duty to meet this procedure with the sincere wish to find in it the elements of a solution which would be equally satisfying to all the signatory powers of the Berlin Treaty."

(288) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 4-17, 1909. *No.* 363.

We learn that the Serbian reply to the communication of Count Forgach has not been recognized as satisfactory at Vienna. Without wishing to enter into any examination of the details of the Serbian answer we have to point out that it has been drafted without our participation, and that it is in no sense in accordance with the counsels which were given in Belgrade; it appears, however, that the Vienna cabinet has the intention of continuing the negotiations with Belgrade and it may be expected that Forgach will send a new communication to the Serbian government.

We have the intention of bringing our entire influence to bear on this case, in order to facilitate an agreement between the Serbian government and the Austrian minister on the text of the Serbian reply, which would be equally satisfying to both parties, and we hope that the government, to which you are accredited, will support our action in the interests of universal peace.

(289) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 4-17, 1909.

The situation grows more acute. The news which reaches us here, regarding increased military preparations on the part of Austria might induce Serbia to adopt similar measures. In any event

[1] Not the case. Austria-Hungary was willing to continue negotiations, as shown in No. 288.

these would be regarded by Austria as a provocation. On the other hand, the Royal government, in view of declarations made by Aehrenthal and Forgach, is convinced that Austria in her next communication will openly demand that Serbia should first of all declare the Bosnio-Herzegovinian question as settled upon the basis of the Austrian-Turkish protocol, so as to facilitate her participation in the conference. Serbia will very likely reply as before, and then the conflict would be inevitable. Simitch [1] believes that the only way out of this critical situation would consist in the Great Powers hindering Austria in one way or another from negotiating directly with Serbia. The minister believes that this might, for instance, be achieved at Belgrade by proposing to the Belgrade cabinet that Serbia should disarm. The Government would unconditionally yield to this request and would in this wise place Austria in an extremely difficult situation with respect to Europe.

Remarkable as this opinion of the minister may appear I nevertheless consider it my duty to communicate it to you.

(290) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, March 4-17, 1909.*

The answer of the Serbian government to Forgach's communication has given no satisfaction at Vienna. *The other Powers are also of the opinion that the answer is not in accordance with present conditions.* It is to be expected that Austria will now make still more energetic demands on Serbia. We are surprised that the Belgrade cabinet though it has apparently, in principle, seen the necessity of yielding to Austria, should not have followed our advice to come to an understanding with Forgach as to the final reply which would have satisfied Austria. One should not forget that with each new demand the Vienna cabinet will increase its claims and thus our task of helping Serbia to the best of our ability in the diplomatic negotiations with the Powers, is rendered extraordinarily difficult.

As we have already stated the Serbian answer given under pressure of coercion, cannot decide the ultimate fate of Bosnia and Herzegovina, even though the Serbian reply should contain a categorical renouncement of these provinces. This question has to

[1] Serbian minister at Vienna.

be settled exclusively by the Powers and their point of view does not depend upon the standpoint of the Serbian government, but is based, as is well known at Belgrade, on questions of law and the necessity of arriving at an agreement between the Powers. Please, communicate this to the Serbian government and express the expectation that these considerations will be given attention in the drafting of the answer, since Forgach will very likely make a new communication in the near future.

(291) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 6-19, 1909. *No. 7.*

The British ambassador in St. Petersburg has been instructed to communicate to you the considerations of his government regarding the German proposal and our answer. The general impression is that the proposal has been, apparently, inspired at Vienna and that its purpose is to render a conference unnecessary. Since the conference is likewise not mentioned in the draft of our answer, the acceptance of the German proposal would therefore lead to the conference being superseded by an exchange of notes. *England's chief reason for expressing herself in favour of a conference is due to Russian wishes; if the Russian Government now considers it possible to give up this idea, the British Government is also prepared to be satisfied with an exchange of notes regarding the following questions: Bosnia, the Herzegovina, Turkey, Bulgaria and the abolishing of Article 29 of the Berlin Treaty which refers to Montenegro.* Grey is also of the opinion that the Russian government would have to postpone the answer to the German proposal until the present Austrian-Serbian crisis had found a solution. *Hardinge*[1] *observed to me that the words contained in your answer to the effect that it was to be feared Vienna had finally determined upon war, are hardly in accordance with the present situation.*

(292) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 9-22, 1909. *No.* 10.

Aehrenthal has communicated to the British ambassador at Vienna the draft of a Serbian note which would satisfy Austria.

[1] British under-secretary for foreign affairs.

It is first of all demanded that Serbia should admit that the annexation of Bosnia had not infringed Serbian rights and that she should promise that in the future she would give up her policy of opposition and of protest regarding the annexation.

Grey has informed Vienna that such a demand would be humiliating for Serbia and would mean an apology for her former conduct. Aehrenthal insisted upon his point of view, but let it be understood that Austria would accept the British proposal, if the Powers, even though singly and in a non-official form, give their assent to the annexation.

In the assumption that this last question must not be brought into connection with the Austrian-Serbian conflict, Grey has the intention, if the situation should not be changed by to-morrow, of communicating a note to Aehrenthal. Cartwright [1] will be instructed to declare that this is the last attempt of the Powers to reconcile Austria with Serbia and he will point to the responsibility which would devolve upon Austria if she should decline such extensive guarantees of the conciliatory intentions of Serbia. If Aehrenthal accepts the English proposal, the representatives of the other Powers would have to give their consent.

Hardinge consulted the French Ambassador and me at the same time today, and we both ventured to express the opinion that the English note contains nothing which is contrary to the view of our governments. Hardinge and Cambon [2] both declared that all excessive demands on the part of Aehrenthal must be met with firmness.

(293) *Iswolsky to the Russian Embassies at Paris and London. Telegram, March* 10-23, 1909.

The German ambassador has made me the following verbal and confidential communication:

"The German government has learned with pleasure, that the Russian Government appreciates the friendly feeling which has inspired the German initiative and that the other Cabinets seem disposed to adhere to the German proposal. The German Government is now prepared to approach the Vienna Cabinet with the

[1] British ambassador at Vienna.
[2] Paul ——, French ambassador at London.

suggestion that the other Powers should be requested, under reference to the notification of the Austro-Turkish agreement, to give their formal assent to the abolition of Art. 25 of the Treaty of Berlin. But before it undertakes this step at Vienna, it should like to have the assurance, that the Cabinet of St. Petersburg is firmly resolved to accede to the Austrian demand and to give its unconditional formal assent to the abolition of Art. 25."

By order of the Czar I have returned to Count Pourtalès the following verbal and confidential reply:

"The German Government has informed the Imperial Government that it is prepared to propose to Austria-Hungary to request the Powers under reference to the notification of the Austro-Turkish agreement, to give their formal assent to the abolition of Art. 25 of the Treaty of Berlin. The Russian Government does not hesitate to declare that, if the Vienna Cabinet applies with such a request to the Powers, Russia will not fail to give its unconditional formal assent. By giving this new proof of our desire to settle the present difficulties, we hope that the Berlin Cabinet will bring its whole influence to bear upon the Vienna Cabinet in order to induce it to accept the English proposal and to arrive at an understanding between Austria-Hungary and Serbia."

(294) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 10-23, 1909. *No.* 409.

Count Pourtalès has added to the communication contained in the previous telegram that a negative or even an evasive answer on our part would lead to the result that Germany "would allow things to take their own course and hold us responsible for the consequences"; at the same time he gave me to understand that the success of the British step at Vienna depends exclusively upon our acceptance of Bülow's proposal.

We have to deal apparently with an action which permits of no contradiction, which has been agreed upon between Vienna and Berlin and which is to place us before the following alternatives: an immediate regulation of the question of annexation by an exchange of notes, or the invasion of Serbia. In view of the great danger which an Austrian-Serbian conflict would mean for us as well as for general peace, and in order to protect Serbia, we have no other choice than to accept the German proposal.

I have consequently, with the assent of the czar, declared to the German ambassador that if the Vienna cabinet undertakes the step mentioned in the German communication, the Russian government will answer by an unconditional acceptance of the proposal. I have added that in giving this new proof of our desire to settle the crisis, we hope that the Berlin cabinet will bring its entire influence to bear upon Vienna in favour of the British initiative. In communicating the above to the minister of foreign affairs I request you to lay special stress on the great sacrifice which we are making for the cause of peace; the cabinets of Berlin and Vienna wish evidently to avoid a conference. *Although we refrain from mentioning the conference at this moment, we have by no means the intention of giving it up, and we are of opinion that the exchange of notes proposed at Berlin does not exclude such a possibility.*

(295) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 11-24, 1909. *No.* 22.

The answer which Your Excellency yesterday gave to Count Pourtalès has caused the greatest satisfaction in the Wilhelmstrasse. Kiderlen [1] regards it as the first step towards a peaceful solution of the crisis. Berlin has notified the cabinets of Paris, London and Rome that the German government has inquired of Russia how she would receive an Austrian inquiry relating to the recognition of the Austro-Turkish agreement, and the alteration of Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty. As a favourable answer has been received from St. Petersburg, the German government would be glad to know how an analogous inquiry of the Vienna cabinet would be received in London, Paris and Rome. *Kiderlen is of the opinion that such a solution does not preclude the possibility of calling together the conference and that the latter, apart from sanctioning the abolishing of Article* 25, *would also have to concern itself with the Bulgarian and Montenegrin questions.* . . . .

Kiderlen called my attention to an article in the "Koelnische Zeitung" which is to appear this evening and the tone of which, as I understand, differs considerably from that which has been adopted recently towards us even by the official press.[2] This turn

[1] Kiderlen-Waechter, German state secretary of foreign affairs.
[2] Which article was accepted by the public as *bona fide*, no doubt.

for the better is apparently the result of your negotiations with Pourtalès. The article in question in no wise touches upon the preliminary negotiations, which Kiderlen does not wish to be mentioned by the press.

(296) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin. Telegram, March* 13-26, 1909. *No.* 425.

Communicated by the French Embassy in St. Petersburg, M. Pichon telegraphs:

"Radolin [1] has communicated to me the decision reached by the Russian government to accept, unconditionally, the abolishing of Article 25. He asked me if we were prepared to return to an Austrian inquiry a similar answer; he added that the German government regards the decision of the Russian minister of foreign affairs as an important step towards a peaceful solution of the crisis, and he believes that the proposed procedure will most effectually support the steps intended to be taken in Belgrade. I replied that we did not hesitate to declare that if Austria should request us to give our unconditional assent, as Russia has done, we would return an affirmative answer, but since this reply is due to our desire to preserve the higher interests of general peace, we would earnestly beg the Austrian government to make this inquiry only after the negotiations, which are at present under way at Vienna for the settlement of the conflict with Serbia, have proved successful. So far as we are aware, the draft of the Serbian note, which was prepared by the Austrian minister of foreign affairs, has been accepted by M. Iswolsky with very slight alterations. Therefore only a short postponement is demanded and we would be pleased to obtain this concession from the Austrian government."

(297) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 13-26, 1909. *No.* 24.

The answer as to how the Austrian inquiry proposed by Germany would be received in London, Paris and Rome has reached Berlin. The reply from Rome is regarded here as satisfactory. That from Paris is less so, but does not exclude the possibility of a consent. The answer from London has disappointed the Wilhelm-

[1] German ambassador at Paris.

strasse. It is assumed that the German ambassadors at Paris and London have not expressed with sufficient clearness the idea on which the German proposal is based, namely that the recognition of the annexation by the Powers would facilitate their common action at Belgrade. Explanatory instructions have been sent to Radolin and Metternich.[1] Baron Schön did not conceal from me his disappointment that the German action had no success in London, since Grey insists that the action of the Powers at Belgrade must precede the recognition of the Austro-Turkish convention.

(298) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin. Telegram, March* 13-26, 1909. *No.* 429.

I am sending you the text of the replies of the cabinets of Paris and London to the German proposal. We deduce from them that England and France accept Bülow's draft with a few reservations which, however, do not affect the substance of the matter. Since the reports concerning warlike preparations on the part of Austria are as disquieting now as before, it seems necessary to us to bring the negotiations which are now taking place at Vienna regarding the form of the Serbian declaration, to as speedy a conclusion as possible. We hope that Aehrenthal will accept the slight alterations which merely concern the form. I have telegraphed to Vienna that we are prepared to accept the draft upon which Aehrenthal will agree with Cartwright. Please request Baron Schön to use his influence at Vienna so that the two pending questions, i.e. the Serbian declaration and Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty, may be settled as quickly as possible. In order to inform public opinion, we have published a *communiqué* without, however, mentioning the negotiations with Count Pourtalès, as desired by Kiderlen.

(299) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March* 14-27, 1909. *No.* 19.

Very confidential.

Cartwright wired yesterday that Aehrenthal most earnestly requested the British government to refrain from all objections to his text of the Serbian note, since he had already received the assurance from you that Russia would accept every text which was

[1] German ambassador at London.

agreed upon between Vienna and London. This assurance of Aehrenthal has made an extraordinarily unpleasant impression here. Hardinge believes that if this declaration be correct, the British endeavours to obtain a more favourable text of the proposed Serbian note must prove from the very beginning unsuccessful. I said that nothing of the kind was known to me and that I had merely to communicate the instructions given to our chargé d'affaires at Vienna regarding the final editing of the note.

(300) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, March 22-April* 4, 1909. *No.* 503.

It appears to me that the affirmative answer to the Austrian enquiry regarding Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty must be given by each of the Powers individually, in consequence of which we have the intention of handing to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador the following reply:

"The undersigned has the honour of informing His Excellency Count Berchtold, Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, in answer to the note of March 21, April 3d of this year, that the Russian Government gives its assent to the abolition of Article 25 of the Berlin Treaty." [1]

Please telegraph if the British Government shares our view.

(301) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March 24-April* 6, 1909. *No.* 30.

Personal and very confidential.

I notice that English public opinion expresses certain fears with regard to the future development of Russian policy towards England, and this fear seems also to prevail in certain Government circles. Yesterday I made use of a favourable opportunity which was offered to me as a consequence of the friendly disposition shown me by Grey to tell him confidentially and in my own name, that whilst admitting that the rumours current among the public and in the newspapers regarding the nature of the German action at St. Petersburg might be exaggerated, nevertheless *everything, which I*

[1] This step terminated the crisis. Documents recently published show that the solution was due to Emperors Nicholas and William II.

knew about the German step made me firmly believe that the latter represented a method which Russia was not likely to forget,[1] and that if there had been any indirect intention of sowing discord between Russia on the one hand and France and England on the other, this purpose would certainly not be achieved. I added that, without wishing to judge of questions beyond my sphere of competency, the newspaper reports about the possibility of your retirement are in my personal opinion devoid of any foundation.

(302) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Report, March* 19-*April* 1, 1909. *No.* 28.

The strike of the telegraphists, quite apart from the disturbances of daily life in France, has also had an extraordinarily unfavourable influence upon the pending political negotiations. Your Excellency's telegram of March 4, '17, which contained Bülow's proposal and formed the basis for our subsequent recognition of the annexation, was received by me only after the lapse of a week, together with several other telegrams of March 3rd, 4th and 8th. I have received only one telegram punctually, without number, containing the draft of your reply to Bülow's proposal. *I at once communicated the contents to the minister of foreign affairs, but the whole affair, and the decision which it was necessary to reach, were so important that M. Pichon, who had received no communication either from Berlin or from St. Petersburg, could express no definite opinion without previous knowledge of the details. In spite of this, I at once telegraphed that M. Pichon was perfectly in accordance with your views about Bülow's proposal.*[2] After the telegraphic communications had been restored, the whole question, under the pressure of the German government, had assumed a direction which was not to be altered.

Though your decision to recognize the Austro-Turkish agreement by an exchange of notes differs from the understanding arrived at between Russia, England and France to discuss this question at a con-

[1] The method consisted of Germany taking the lead in a movement that resulted in the abolition of Art. 25 of the Berlin Treaty by means of an exchange of notes between the signatory powers instead of the conference proposed by Iswolsky and poorly supported in London and Paris.

[2] The observation may be permitted that Nelidoff went a little too far in thus usurping the office of the French minister of foreign affairs.

ference, the French government was on the whole satisfied, since your decision contributed to the peaceful solution of a crisis which threatened to lead to an armed conflict, the cause for which, as I have already reported to you, found no echo in the French population.

The magnitude of our sacrifice has been perfectly well understood here, and public opinion is grateful to you for the courageous determination to secure the preservation of European peace at this high price. Nevertheless, the Foreign Office here was unpleasantly affected by the fact that the Russian government, which had hitherto acted in accordance with London and Paris, had not also made its agreement dependent upon that of the other Powers, and that the recognition of the annexation of Bosnia was not conditioned by the assent of Austria to the proposals made by the three Powers respecting Serbia. In this wise the danger of a conflict continued to persist and only in consequence of the determination of the English government has the Vienna cabinet conceded the preceding solution of the Austrian-Serbian conflict.

All these circumstances, which have found a lively echo in the press, were bound to influence the general verdict regarding our method of negotiation in an unfavourable sense. In connection with this, German and Austrian journals have emphasized the success of Austrian diplomacy and the predominant position of the Dual Monarchy in the Balkans. In consequence of this, public opinion in France as well as in England, demands more and more a still greater rapprochement between Russia, France and England as they have already acted in common during the Austrian-Serbian conflict.[1] Foreseeing the further development of the European situation many newspapers come to the conclusion that precisely as Germany and Austria have now achieved a brilliant victory, *so must the two Western Powers, together with Russia, now pay their attention to the systematic development of their forces in order to be able, once they are in a position not to fear a challenge of the Triple-Alliance—and in this case Italy would separate herself from the Triple-Alliance—to set up on their part demands which would restore the political balance which has now been displaced in favour of Germany and Austria.*

[1] Public opinion in France and Great Britain was well satisfied with the solution reached, so that M. Nelidoff must have mistaken his own, for public, opinion.

The experience of the last five years has shown us that a policy of this sort need not necessarily lead to war. During the Morocco crisis the close unity of the Dual Alliance in conjunction with England, brought the German attempts to a standstill. Also in the present instance the supremacy of the one side has been attained without the shedding of blood. It is merely necessary to establish a close agreement between the Powers, and to be firmly determined not to admit further provocations on the part of the Triple Alliance, disposing at the same time of sufficiently strong forces which would enable us to offer resistance.

This is the direction which the Paris and also, apparently, the London cabinet wish to give to their policy in the firm conviction that Russian policy is also directed towards this end, since the shifting of the European balance of power closely concerns Russia.

Public opinion in France is fully in agreement with such a plan and will support the Government, even though there exists the wish to live in peace with Germany and to develop their mutual commercial and financial relations.

(303) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Report, March* 19-*April* 1, 1909. *No.* 30.

".....The movement of the Central European States towards the Mediterranean is contrary not only to our own intentions but also to the interests of our allies and friends, the French and the English. The latter in particular are concerned with protecting the road from the Suez Canal to India and deem it necessary to oppose every effort to interfere with this way. For instance the convention concluded with Spain last year, about the maintaining of the *status quo* in Spanish waters, had its origin in the reports which reached London to the effect that Germany intended to purchase one of the Spanish islands in the Mediterranean in order to build a coaling station there. It would also be unpleasant for France if German naval forces were to appear in the vicinity of her coast. In view of Germany's position at Constantinople, the presence of the German fleet in the Mediterranean would be just as dangerous to Russia, *as was the predominant position which England occupied in Turkey, until the agreement which you have concluded with London eliminated the causes of possible conflicts between*

Russia and England.[1] *All these circumstances show how necessary it is for us to bind ourselves still more closely to France and England in order to oppose in common the further penetration of Germany and Austria in the Balkans.*

Such an opposition need not, under all circumstances, lead to an armed conflict with the Triple Alliance. Just as Austria, supported by Germany, concentrated her fighting forces and threatened Serbia without listening to the just demands of Europe, so might we, too, in agreement with France and England, after our military strength will have been re-established, force Austria-Hungary in a favourable moment to give up her Balkan plans and to restore to the now subjugated Serbians their freedom of action.[2] *The experience of the last crisis has proved that if military measures are already prepared in times of peace, diplomatic questions may all the easier be solved by threats and the exercise of strong pressure. The art of diplomacy consists of selecting the favourable moment and of utilising a favourable general situation, so that conscious of one's own strength, one may hold out to the end.* Thus we shall undoubtedly be able to weaken the unfavourable impression which the failure of our policy has now produced and in this way we will gradually succeed in liberating the kindred Balkan States from the Austro-German influence.

At the present critical moment I consider it my duty to point to the tendency of our policy which, according to my firm conviction, is alone in accordance with our own interests, and which will be as well supported by the French as, I believe, by the British Government.

(304) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, March* 19-*April* 1, 1909.[3]

The press has violently attacked the government during the last few days; France is accused of not having fulfilled her obligations towards Russia and to have in this wise forced the latter to yield to the demands of the Vienna cabinet, which was supported by Germany. M. Pichon considers these accusations as wholly unfounded and has issued a *dementi* of them through Havas, empha-

[1] Refers to Anglo-Russian convention regarding Persia.
[2] Serbia's freedom of action was not limited, except in the Pan-Slav sense.
[3] Both letters, Nos. 303 and 304 were written on March 19-April 1, 1909.

sizing in this that France as well as England had, in conjunction with Russia, followed the policy determined upon from the beginning. The *Temps* has further developed this thought in the enclosed leading article. *As I have already informed Your Excellency at the time, the French Government had not confined itself entirely to diplomatic measures.* The French ambassador at Berlin had called the attention of M. Pichon to the fact, that Germany and Austria proceeded in so decisive a manner, because they were convinced that Russia would under no circumstance determine upon a war, and that in all probability England and France would refrain from participating in a war, even if Russia should be drawn into it.

Jules Cambon added that it would be necessary to take some kind of military measures which would show that France is resolved to fulfil her treaty of alliance with Russia. In addition he indicated the unfavourable impression which had been produced through the utterance of an English Minister to the effect that England had no intention of waging war on account of Serbia. These advices were received here at the outbreak of the telegraphers' strike and were at once given to the prime minister and also sent to London by a special courier.

In consequence of this, orders were immediately given here to grant no permits for furlough in the Eastern Army Corps, and various troop-movements and other measures as preliminaries to the mobilisation were carried out.

These advices were also followed in London, and it was agreed with the French government to assemble a squadron which was to concentrate at Malta. The British Admiralty also adopted other measures.[1] In the meantime, however, the telegraphic agencies have informed all Europe of a secret session of the Ministerial Council at Tsarskoe Selo at which the Ministers of Finance, Commerce and War had shown that it would be impossible for Russia to wage war.

A public exposure of this kind of our weakness has made a most painful impression upon our friends and must encourage our opponents to present the most impossible demands to Russia in the firm conviction that we shall yield. *The cabinets of Paris and*

[1] M. Nelidoff strays a great deal between fact and fancy in these three letters. Is one to infer that he had to inform his government by slow mail of the measures of mobilization adopted by the French and British governments?

London have concluded from this that Russia, France and England must pay more attention than ever to action in common and must at the same time proceed to the necessary military measures in order to convince their opponents that they are dealing with a political combination which knows how to make itself respected and to carry through its demands.

Only thus will it be possible to restore the European balance of power which has been disturbed in favour of the Triple Alliance, and only in this manner will Russia be able to win back her influence with the Balkan States, which she has temporarily lost. *And finally only in this manner will Russia be able to fulfil that great historic mission to which she has been predestined by Providence.*

(305) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March 26-April 8,* 1909.

Personal and strictly confidential.

Hardinge has shown me in confidence a telegram from the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, which reports the conversation with you. The impression made is a very deep one. Your intention to resign is extremely regretted, as well as the doubts which you have expressed regarding the further designs of English policy. In this connection I can bear witness that English policy has never had a more decisive and clearer basis. This is shown not only by the government but also by the population.

The incident of which you speak and in course of which the British government may perhaps have acted with too little circumspection, can surely in no case be regarded as a sign of a change of policy. The thought by which Grey was dominated was surely not that of withdrawing the Montenegrin question from the decisions of the Powers. Since Italy, conjointly with England, was the only Power, which set up definite conditions with regard to Montenegro,[1] *Grey acted in common with Italy.* This may have been a lack of circumspection, but I believe one ought not on this account to forget the very energetic support which England has always given us in difficult circumstances. I am telegraphing you this with the intention of correcting your last

[1] Montenegro, never too tractable with the Russian government, was leaning towards Italy, owing to family ties, the Queen of Italy being a daughter of the King of Montenegro.

impression regarding English policy. According to my point of view this can in no case furnish a reason for your resignation.

In this incident, I can discern no real divergence of principle. Moreover, English support in Cettinje has already ceased, which in my opinion reduces the incident again to its proper proportions. To conclude, I can do nothing else than to implore you once more to examine closely your conclusions and decisions. For these might lead to extremely unfortunate consequences for our political situation.

(306) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Report, April* 2-15, 1909.

The danger of an armed encounter in consequence of the annexation of Bosnia and the declaration of Bulgaria's independence seems to be obviated. The principal international problems rendered acute by the one-sided action of the Vienna cabinet and the Bulgarian government appear to be settled. There remains only the fulfilment of diplomatic formalities, which will hardly lead to serious complications. The general nervousness that has influenced the course of events in Europe has given place to a feeling of decided relief which has re-acted on the exchanges and on finance.

The majority of the ministers have used the Easter holidays to leave Paris. The minister of foreign affairs, too, has left for the Jura and intended to meet the president of the Republic at Nice on April 11, '12, where the solemn unveiling of Gambetta's statue is to take place. But the sudden outbreak of dangerous disturbances at Constantinople [1] has occasioned the prime minister to summon Pichon back to Paris. The disquieting news from Turkey has naturally greatly occupied public opinion. The possibility of the riots spreading further is feared here, and, as a consequence, armed encounters, and persecution of Christians in the Balkans, which would be equivalent to the re-opening of the Oriental problem to its full dreadful extent.

I cannot but deplore the fact that this moment finds us unprepared not only to solve the Oriental question in a sense favourable to ourselves, but even to take part effectively in the regulation of this question, for

[1] Bomb outrages by Armenians in Constantinople and massacres of Armenians in the vilayets.

historical experience, for example the latest events, have again proved that world-problems of such a nature cannot be solved without resorting to force. In full recognition of this truth, I have never ceased to insist, during my fifteen years' activity as ambassador at Constantinople, on Russia's being prepared for events which may be undeterminable as to time, but which are in any case inevitable. This question seemed definitely settled shortly before my departure from Turkey. *All preparations had been made by our war ministry and the admiralty staff to influence matters in the Turkish capital, should disturbances take place there.* Unfortunately, we were able to convince ourselves during the secret conferences held under your chairmanship last summer that nothing remains of these precautionary measures.

Will you now permit me to give utterance to the hope that, thanks to your efforts, measures will be taken, or the urgency of such at least recognised, to enable Russia to fulfil her historic mission and to prevent a world-problem being settled in a manner not in accordance with our interests.[1]

[1] The documents show that the "historic mission" of Russia in this respect consisted of incorporating Turkey-in-Europe from the Enos-Media line eastward, including Constantinople, the Bosphorus, Dardanelles and as much of Asia Minor as possible.

II

ISWOLSKY AND THE FORMING OF THE BALKAN LEAGUE

(March 1909—January 1910)

(307) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Sofia to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb. 28-March* 13, 1909.

As I am informed by the Serbian chargé d'affaires, Milovanovitch, the Serbian minister of foreign affairs, is very well satisfied with his two days' stay at Sofia. From his conversations with Czar Ferdinand, the ministers and other political personalities, he gained the impression that both countries have common political interests that point to the neccessity of a closer relationship. The Czar mentioned to him the ineffaceable impression made on him by his journey to St. Petersburg, and pointed to the fact that military power [1] and a lively interest for the Slav States were reviving at St. Petersburg.

(308) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Iswolsky. Telegram, April* 3-16, 1909.

The Serbian Minister told the Prime Minister today that the Belgrade Cabinet considered it desirable to enter on an exchange of views with Bulgaria in connection with Turkish events, in order to concert common action for the protection of their mutual interests. The same communication was made by Milovanovitch to the Bulgarian representative at Belgrade. M. Malinoff replied that it was difficult to come to a decision in the matter at this time, since the entire attention of the Bulgarian Government was at the mo-

[1] Recuperation of Russian army from effects of Russo-Japanese war.

ment directed to the question of the recognition of its independence. *In spite of this he would be glad to have further information, and he has requested Milovanovitch to communicate to him his views on the Turkish events and his conception of a common plan of action.*

(309) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Sofia. Telegram, April* 5-18, 1909.

The Serbian Government has asked us to support its effort to begin negotiations with Bulgaria regarding common action in the Turkish crisis.[1] You will learn our standpoint from my telegram to our Minister at Belgrade. I beg you on your part to keep this standpoint in mind should further negotiations between Bulgaria and Serbia take place. Although I am able to perceive from the words of the Bulgarian Minister here that his Government is seriously prepared to consider the question of closer relations to Serbia, we must, nevertheless, to a certain degree doubt the success of such negotiations as we know from former experience.

Nevertheless, we have ground for expecting a greater success this time, since the complete subjugation of Serbia by Austria is feared in Bulgaria, for this would mean the immediate neighbourhood of Austria-Hungary to Bulgaria; on the other hand the Bulgarian minister has expressed to me his conviction that Bulgaria would now arrive at a complete understanding with Serbia in the Macedonian question. *From all this it can be seen how carefully the negotiations between Serbia and Bulgaria must be carried on, and that we too must not figure in them too actively.*

(310) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, April* 5-18, 1909.

We have always been in sympathy with the idea of a rapprochement between Bulgaria and Serbia and desired a common plan of action on the part of these two Powers to prevent misunderstandings which might prove dangerous to the common Slav interests.

I have spoken in this sense to the Bulgarian Minister here, who has assured me that Bulgaria likewise wishes to act in solidarity with Serbia. I am communicating this to our Minister at Sofia, since Paprikoff [2] intends to occupy himself with this question after his return to Sofia.

[1] Revolution; deposal of Sultan Abdul Hamid.
[2] Bulgarian premier and minister of foreign affairs.

It is desirable that Serbia should maintain her self-control during the Turkish crisis, and above all through her actions or uncautious negotiations with Bulgaria afford Austria no pretext to interfere actively in the Turkish question. Please confer confidentially with Milovanovitch in this sense.

(311) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Iswolsky. Report, April* 14-27, 1909. *No.* 34.

Since the conclusion of the Serbian-Austrian conflict, Serbian sympathies for Bulgaria are becoming more and more evident. The press speaks in louder and louder tones of the necessity of a *rapprochement* between the two countries on the basis of general Slav interests. This standpoint is also shared by the Serbian Government. The overtures made in this sense by the Bulgarian representative in Belgrade have been received with great approval. In spite of this, the negotiations which are already under way have not as yet led to any positive result—not even the rough draft of an agreement between the two Slav States has been decided upon.

(312) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Iswolsky. Telegram, April* 21-*May* 4, 1909.

Today, in solemn audience, I was the first among the foreign representatives here to hand my credentials to King Ferdinand.[1] In a conversation of one hour, which followed upon this, the King spoke in the warmest terms of the support which Bulgaria had found in our Sovereign, and referred to Bulgaria's readiness to develop the cordial relations which exist between Russia and Bulgaria. The idea of a still closer *rapprochement* between the two countries was now being discussed at Sofia and the King hoped that I too would take part in this. As I have received no instructions in this respect, but infer from the words of the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs that the question of a political agreement between Russia and Bulgaria had been accepted in principle, I answered the King in general terms and indicated that it would be desirable that Paprikoff should set up concrete proposals. In this way I think we would occupy a favourable position during the negotiations.

[1] Upon his elevation to czar.

(313) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Sofia. Telegram, April 29-May 12, 1909.*

Your telegram of April 21 received. All that you have said to King Ferdinand in respect to the prospective political agreement, meets with our approval. *You may say further that the Russian Government will be glad to consider and examine concrete proposals on the part of Bulgaria.*

(314) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Iswolsky. Report, May 12-25, 1909. No. 38.*

So far as I am able to ascertain, the Bulgarian Government has replied evasively to the Serbian proposal to use the text of the old commercial treaty betwen Serbia and Bulgaria as a point of departure for the impending negotiations. Without making a direct refusal, the Bulgarian Government has indicated that it preferred to postpone the discussion of this question for the present. It must, however, be remarked that it was precisely upon the basis of these concrete proposals that a first *rapprochement* might have taken place which would then have had to assume more distinct forms. The Serbians wish to conduct the negotiations on a basis of equality, whilst Bulgaria evidently merely wishes to listen to the Serbian proposals without making any proposals of her own, which causes offense in Government circles here. Hence the possibility of a *rapprochement* appears very doubtful, in spite of the fact that the present political situation affords the most favourable preliminary conditions, at least so far as the immediate future is concerned.

(315) *The Same to the Same. Report, May 26-June 8, 1909. No. 44.*

The Serbo-Bulgarian negotiations are still at a standstill. In Serbian Government circles this regrettable delay is ascribed not so much to the negative attitude of the Bulgarian Government as to the personal views of King Ferdinand.

This view is reinforced by the circumstance that the Bulgarian King has plainly shown on a number of occasions that he does not wish to meet the Serbian efforts. For example, on his journey through Belgrade en route to Venice, he refused his consent to an official reception in Serbia and stopped the royal train at the lit-

tle Hungarian frontier town of Semlin instead of at Belgrade. Furthermore, when the Serbian Representative at Sofia was to present his credentials, the following words were to be embodied in these:

"Slav solidarity, the voice of the blood, common sorrows and hopes and more than all this—the unshakeable belief in our common future induces us to hail the Bulgarian success as an important event of our common future."

The Bulgarian Cabinet raised objections to these words and demanded their alteration. The Serbian Representative therefore contented himself with a speech of greeting kept within the limits of generalities.

These incidents induce the Serbian Government to assume that Bulgaria is exceeding the limits of consideration due to Austria, and thereby renders the *rapprochement* between the two sister nations, which is at present so desirable, impossible.

(316) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Sofia. Confidential Letter, Aug.* 3-16, 1909. *No.* 759.

I have received your last political reports which deal with the important question of the present direction of Bulgarian foreign policy. Your information coincides with what has been communicated to me from Serbian sources. Both have mentioned the momentous circumstance that the Bulgarian Government had expressed the wish, that from the credentials of the Serbian Government the words which mention the close relations between the two Slav peoples should be eliminated. . . . .

With regard, however, to your mention of the possibility of a partition of Serbia such a supposition appears to us improbable, since Bulgaria could scarcely wish to become an immediate neighbourhood state to Austria-Hungary.

In consideration of all these circumstances, the Russian Government cannot remain indifferent to the new tendency of Bulgarian policy, and I request you to enter on a confidential exchange of opinion with the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs. You may make use of the material herewith placed at your disposal, without, however, letting it be known from which sources it originates, and explain to the Minister in a friendly way how unfavourable is the impression made upon us, on the one hand by the secret

relations to Vienna and on the other by the unfriendly attitude towards the neighbouring Slav State. We naturally do not admit the possibility that during the existence of certain mutual obligations between Russia and Bulgaria, the latter should really have the intention of assuming obligations to Austria, *yet we find that the Russian Government, without wishing to interfere in the domestic affairs of the kingdom, has the right to demand that Bulgaria, upon whom Russia has just conferred so important a service, should show greater frankness.*

(317) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Confidential Letter, Oct.* 21-*Nov.* 3, 1909.

I have sent you a telegraphic report concerning the impression received by the Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs during his London visit and his conversations with Sir Edward Grey and Hardinge as to the attitude of Italy in international policy. In general he was told what I had already been told by Hardinge. But to Milovanovitch, Sir Edward Grey appears to have made a special reference to the possibility that Austria might make a step to weaken the enduring and favourable impression which the visit of the Russian Czar to the Italian Court had called forth.[1]

These fears appear to be excessive to Milovanovitch; it appears to him improbable that Aehrenthal will decide to take any active step.

The Serbian Minister did not tell me why he came to London; Hardinge, however, whom I saw yesterday, explained to me that he, as well as Grey, found Milovanovitch to be too restless, and possibly too enterprising besides. It was incomprehensible to him why Milovanovitch had brought up here in London the question of transferring the terminal to the future Adriatic railway more toward the south.[2] He was given the answer that England had no direct interest in this affair, which was of interest rather to Roumania with whom Serbia should therefore come to an understanding.

In addition, the Serbian Minister expressed the wish that the future status of the Sandjak be exactly defined in order to prevent

[1] Refers to consummation of Russo-Italian Agreement of Racconigi, guaranteeing *status quo* in the Balkan peninsula.
[2] Through Albania instead of Montenegro.

future annexation on the part of Austria. Hardinge did not tell me what Sir Edward Grey had replied, yet the answer appears to have been of a negative nature, since he informed me at the same time that Tittoni [1] had applied to the British Ambassador at Rome with a similar request. Tittoni, referring to the agreement concluded between Italy and Russia at Racconigi, regarding the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans, an agreement also accepted by England and France, seems to consider it possible to invite the other States, that is Austria and Germany, to accede to this agreement.

Hardinge called Tittoni an "extremely nervous" man,[2] *and gave me to understand that the raising of such a question would be regarded here as untimely and dangerous.*

It appears to me that, in view of the reference to the attitude of Italy and the possible intentions of Austria, it was not only desirable to restrain Serbia from some thoughtless step, but also to indicate to Italy that she ought not to change her attitude of waiting. In reality any action by Aehrenthal, in respect to the meeting of Racconigi, is here considered as improbable also.

(318) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Rome to Iswolsky. Telegram, Nov.* 2-15, 1909.

During a conversation with the British Ambassador, Tittoni gave expression to the opinion that, since a convention had been concluded at Racconigi between Russia and Italy for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans, and since Austria also had recognized this point of view, it ought to be possible to carry out this principle in practice. Tittoni spoke neither of any demand addressed to the Great Powers, nor of any mutual obligation in writing. *Since similar rumours had been mentioned in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs it is intended to deny them not only in London and St. Petersburg, but also at Paris.*

(319) *The Russian Ambassador at Vienna to Iswolsky. Telegram, Nov.* 9-22, 1909.

I have just spoken to Aehrenthal. He repeated to me what I have already written you on October 31 regarding his desire to

[1] Italian minister of foreign affairs.
[2] As minister of a country that was a member of the Triple Alliance.

put an end to the newspaper polemic regarding the relations between the Cabinets of St. Petersburg and Vienna.[1] He repeated in a most decisive manner his protest against the rôle ascribed to Berchtold and he will have a *dementi* issued through the Press Bureau against all such rumours. The Minister is opposed to the publication of documents, and I on my part have agreed to this point of view. The whole question is therefore settled.

(320) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Iswolsky. Report, Nov.* 12-25, 1910. *No.* 52.

The secret letter of Your Excellency of Oct. 4 of this year, No. 848, which contained instructions to use the present moment in order to induce the Bulgarian Government to effect a *rapprochement* with Serbia, was received here at the time of my return from leave of absence. . . . . .

The Imperial Government is aware that during my three years' activity at Sofia I have omitted nothing to bring about frank and lasting relations between Bulgaria and Serbia. In the course of the numerous conversations which I have had, not only with members of the Government, but with the King himself and with various party leaders, I have brought forward all those reasons which point to the necessity of a *rapprochement* between the two Slav States. . . . . .

One should not forget that the Bulgarians are a people of practical nature, and it must be known to the Ministry that the present Bulgarian Prime Minister has described himself as a realist in politics. If one assumes this standpoint an agreement with Serbia appears unnecessary. *Serbia can give nothing to Bulgaria, and alone she can do nothing to help Bulgaria to realize her national aspirations.*[2]

One must also bear in mind that the decisive factor in Bulgarian foreign policy is King Ferdinand, who lets himself be guided above all by personal considerations.

Under such circumstances it will be necessary to canalize so to say the policy of Bulgaria, keeping in mind that the direction which we wish

[1] An attempt was being made to improve diplomatic relations between Russia and Austria-Hungary. The documents show that this was a mere diplomatic maneuver.

[2] In the Dobrudja against Rumania, and in Macedonia and Thrace against Turkey.

to give to Bulgarian policy has to correspond on broad lines to that of Serbia. So far as I am aware, the Serbian political leaders have placed themselves on the side of Russia for good, and as a consequence they are now on the way towards a rapprochement with France and England.[1] This formula would also have to be accepted by Bulgaria. To this end it will be necessary to convince the latter that, in accepting this formula, she would assure to herself the complete realization of her national ideals. Under such circumstances it will also prove difficult for King Ferdinand to deviate from this way, *without having to fear that such a deviation would be interpreted as treason for which he would have to give a personal accounting, and this fear would restrain him.* The best proof is his former standpoint with regard to the Macedonian movement.

But in order to give events this direction it is necessary that we too should exactly define the aims of our policy and prepare the means on condition, of course, that our policy, as I have already emphasized, bears a "national and Slav" character.[2]

If we, by one means or the other, shall have proved here that Russia has finally and for good placed herself on this standpoint, it will be easy to effect an union of the Slav States of the Balkans, for in that case all of them would have a general and fundamental interest in common. For this reason, I have often pointed out that the union of the Balkan nations is possible only if Russia takes the whole matter in her own hands—otherwise all efforts will be futile.

I made use of my first conversation with the Prime Minister to mention the question of the Bulgarian-Serbian relations. Malinoff sought to convince me that these relations were "friendly;" but it seemed to me that he himself scarcely believes this. In addition I spoke in the same sense to the Chief of the Privy Cabinet[3] who has communicated the substance of our conversation to the King. I have thus done everything that is at present necessary, but, as I have said, *we must get to the root, and this is to be found in the fundamental considerations which I have presented above with perfect frankness and which are the result of my three years' activity here.*

[1] Perfected by circumstances and Russian efforts in 1914.
[2] Pan-Slav.
[3] M. Dobrovitch, a man of great influence in Bulgaria.

III

THE RUSSO-AUSTRIAN BALKAN "RAPPROCHEMENT"

(February—October 1910)

(321) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna to Iswolsky. Telegram, Jan.* 14-27, 1910.

A propos of the rumours published in the entire Austrian and foreign press, regarding the possibility of a decrease of tension and a *rapprochement* between our two cabinets, Aehrenthal has requested me to inform you that he has nothing to do with this press campaign, and, likewise, that he never doubted that these rumours did not originate in Government circles at St. Petersburg. As he has already informed you, the minister believes that it would be advisable to enlighten public opinion only after the question had assumed a more definite form,[1] and that in all cases the orientation of public opinion could be undertaken only in common. It is with regret that I have established the fact that the newspapers have seized upon all these questions in their first stage, and I believe that the dissatisfaction may be traced back to the conversation between Wesselitski and Aehrenthal. The Minister told me that he hoped to be able to give you an answer on Saturday.

(322) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Letter, Jan.* 21-*Feb.* 3, 1910.

You have been so kind as to inform me of the latest phase of our relations to Austria-Hungary. I thank you for these communications and I note with the greatest satisfaction that Aehrenthal,

[1] The question of a better understanding between Russia and Austria-Hungary.

having become conscious of his former wrong and the political disadvantages that ensued therefrom, is now making efforts once more to establish normal relations with you. I appreciate your answer to the latest overtures of Count Berchtold the more highly since in your answer, quite ignoring the personal side, you confine yourself exclusively to the question of political interests; for there is no doubt that it would be advantageous to establish an agreement between ourselves and Austria in Balkan questions.

I sincerely desire that these negotiations should lead to results, which, morever, I consider to be beyond doubt. But I cannot help to doubt seriously the sincerity of the explanations of the Vienna Cabinet and its intention to act under all circumstances in accordance with these explanations. . . . .

As to the substance of the question, the most important point for us, as well as for the cause of general peace, is the principle of the preservation of the *status quo* in Balkan policy. Once this principle has been clearly set up and recognized by the other Great Powers, a brake would be applied to the ambition of the small Balkan States; they would at one and the same time be assured of their future, and the Austrian plans in the Balkans would also be hedged in in an effective manner. . . . . .

An agreement of this sort, concluded for a certain number of years, would leave the Balkan States at perfect liberty, both in regard to their internal development as well as to their mutual relations, which they might develop in every possible way. *At the same time Russia would be placed in a position which would enable her to develop her military forces in all security and to prepare herself for those events which cannot be avoided. In the meantime, the further evolution of the Ottoman Empire would be clearer—the problems would mature, and we would be able to meet the events that are to be foreseen much better equipped than otherwise.* . . . . . .

(323) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna. Letter, Jan. 23-Feb.* 5, 1910.

On January 19—February 1, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, in the name of his government, made me a verbal communication, the contents of which were at once written down by me

and confirmed by Berchtold. This communication reads as follows:

"As you are aware, I reported to my government regarding our last conversation. First of all, I made clear your point of view, regarding the article in the *Fortnightly Review*[1] and made the point that you conceived it to be your right to demand that this article be rectified in so far as it contained false and slanderous allegations, at the same time, however, you recognized that one must avoid a revival of polemics in the newspapers, and were prepared to drop the personal side of the matter in the interests of the cause itself. Aehrenthal is also of the opinion that it is untimely, and even dangerous, to revert to this article in the press, and he declares that he is prepared to come to an understanding with you as to the manner in which an interpellation, that may be made in the Duma and in the Delegations,[2] is to be answered. Quite apart from this personal side of the question I had also to report to my Minister your overtures in connection with the re-establishing of contact between the two governments.

"Aehrenthal is quite of your opinion that the re-establishing of an exchange of opinion between our two countries could exert only a favourable influence upon the normal and peaceful development of the Oriental questions.

"A contact of this kind might the more easily be established since we still acknowledge the principles of the Convention of 1897, principles which will permit us to take up an exchange of opinion with the St. Petersburg Cabinet at any time. These basic principles are the following:

"1. Maintenance of the *status quo* in Turkey, so long as circumstances permit.

"2. A mutual *désintéressement* in case the *status quo* can no longer be maintained and

"3. A policy of non-interference in the latter case."

I replied to Count Berchtold that I would not fail to submit his statement to the Czar and then communicate to him the answer of the Russian Government.

[1] Contained statements offensive to the Russian Government, its ambassador at Vienna, and Iswolsky.

[2] The Austrian Reichsrat and the Hungarian Parliament.

(324) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Iswolsky. Telegram, Jan. 20-Feb. 2, 1910.*

The news received from abroad concerning an impending *rapprochement* between Russia and Austria has created an immense sensation here. The agitation grows more bitter from day to day and evokes great perturbation in political, administrative and social circles. The view is expressed in newspaper articles, even official ones, that in the event of a reconciliation between the two Monarchies, Serbia will prove to be the victim since she would then be abandoned to complete enslavement by Austria. In connection with this a special Ministerial Council has been convened and I am met on all sides with anxious inquiries. I believe it is necessary to make a few reassuring declarations, if you consider this possible. In this case, I beg you to notify me in what sense I am to speak here.

(325) *Iswolsky to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, Jan. 22-Feb. 4, 1910.*

Your telegram of January 20 received.

Our negotiations with Austria must cause no anxiety whatsoever to the Serbian Government. *These negotiations deal neither with a division into spheres of interest, nor with a return in one form or another to the former understanding, but merely with a resumption of normal diplomatic relations between the two Cabinets.* Our chief objective is the best possible maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans and the peaceful development and independence of the Balkan States. You may communicate this confidentially to the Belgrade Cabinet. I have already spoken to the Serbian Minister in this sense.

(326) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Telegram, Jan. 22-Feb. 4, 1910. No. 37.*

Since the Austrian Ambassador has already spoken with the Turkish Foreign Minister regarding the expected *rapprochement* between Austria and Russia on the basis of Balkan questions, and has maintained the point of view which Austria attempts to present to the Sublime Porte, do you not consider it necessary that we inform the Turkish Government of the position which Russia

assumes in this question? *In consequence of Austrian hints, the Turks fear that it is once more a question of an agreement for the purpose of partitioning Turkey.*[1]

Just as we were able to produce a reassuring effect with regard to the agreements entered into at Racconigi, we must now reconcile the Turks to the thought of normal relations between St. Petersburg and Vienna. To this end we must give them to understand that there is no question of a renewal of the Mürzsteg Program,[2] but that Austria is conscious of the disadvantages of strained relations with the St. Petersburg Cabinet and has felt herself obliged to accept the Russian Balkan program—the latter, to which Italy has also subscribed, was based, as is well-known, upon good relations with Turkey and upon the effort to ensure equal rights to all Turkish subjects; and finally upon the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans.

(327) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Jan. 24-Feb. 6, 1910. No. 136.*

Your telegram No. 37 received.

We entirely share your opinion regarding the exchange of views which is at present taking place between ourselves and Vienna. Our negotiations with Austria are not directed against Turkey in any sense, towards which country now as before we cherish only friendly sentiments. There is no question of a partition of Turkey, nor of a demarcation of spheres of interest, nor of a renewal of the former agreement, but merely of the resumption of normal diplomatic relations between both Cabinets, in connection with which our chief objective is the most clearly expressed guarantee of the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans.

I beg you to speak in this sense to the Turkish Government.[3]

(328) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna. Letter, Jan. 27-Feb. 9, 1910.*

I must inform you that in the name of the Czar I today made answer to the communication of the Austrian Ambassador under

[1] Tcharikoff fails to produce his evidence as to "Austrian hints." Why should Austria make them seeing that she was a partner to this case of improving international relations?

[2] Of 1897.

[3] Correspondence on this subject continues with Documents Nos. 356 and 397.

date of January 19. In spite of the fact that this answer was given verbally I, at the same time, handed an *aide mémoire* of the following contents in order accurately to define the expressions:

"Although we are of the opinion that it is preferable not to revert to the article in the *Fortnightly Review,* we are prepared to come to an understanding with Aehrenthal, in case public declarations in this question should become necessary.

"The Imperial Government gladly agrees to the idea of an exchange of views between both Governments regarding the leading principles of their Balkan policies; it believes, however, that under the prevailing circumstances this exchange of opinion can no longer have the character of the agreement of 1897 and must, on the contrary, assume a form which would render it possible for all interested Powers to participate in this exchange of views; on the other hand, in formulating the principles in question, the recent changes in the political situation of Turkey have to be considered.

"The Imperial Government for this reason proposes to the Vienna Cabinet that the following points be accepted, and that these be either defined by means of an exchange of notes or embodied in a single document which might then be brought to the knowledge of the other Powers:

"1. The maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkan Peninsula.

"2. Since the new régime in Turkey is based on the equality of rights of all nationalities living in Turkey—the preservation and consolidation of this new condition of things.

"3. Independence, consolidation[1] and peaceful development of the smaller Balkan States."

(329) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Feb. 11-24, 1910. No. 245.*

On February 7 Count Berchtold handed me the answer of the Vienna Cabinet to our last communication. This answer does not object to our three points which are already known to you. On the other hand, the Vienna Cabinet obviously wishes to avoid making a communication to the other Powers, and proposes that we content ourselves with a public announcement containing the

[1] Was actually in progress under strictly Russian auspices.

simple statement that the exchange of opinion between both Governments had led to satisfactory results.

I have anwered Count Berchtold today by a memorandum to the effect that I note the fact that perfect unity exists between Russia and Austria-Hungary as to political principles in questions affecting the Balkans, and that consequently the normal political relations between both Cabinets might be resumed. At the same time I have added that, according to our point of view, a simple communication of this kind would under the prevailing circumstances not be sufficient, and that it was in the interests of general peace, already at this moment to persuade the other cabinets to support the principles recognized by Russia and Austria, in order that should any possible event threaten the *status quo,* an exchange of views might at once take place between the interested Powers.[1] I thus repeated our proposal to bring those points upon which we had come to an agreement, to the notice of the other Powers.

Please communicate the above confidentially to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and express the hope that he will give us his moral support at Vienna, in order to overcome Aehrenthal's aversion to our proposal, since we attach to it a very great importance.

(330) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 13-26, 1910. *No.* 40.

Your telegram No. 245 received.

I have communicated its contents confidentially this morning. Grey is very grateful and is prepared to take action at Vienna. *Nicolson*[2] *has been instructed to ask you in what form you would like to see this done, since our communication to the London Cabinet is a very confidential one and Vienna has no knowledge of this step.*

(331) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Feb.* 14-27, 1910. *No.* 256.

Your telegram No. 40 received.

I replied to Nicolson's question that Cartwright,[3] without indicating that he was aware of the contents of our last *aide mémoire,*

[1] Aehrenthal considered this a trap, because of Iswolsky's insistence upon a conference a year before.
[2] British ambassador at St. Petersburg.
[3] British ambassador at Vienna.

might tell Aehrenthal in general terms that *the London Cabinet desires that the Austro-Russian negotiations should lead to a result and that it considers it above all things extremely expedient that all other Powers should participate in this result.*

(332) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Iswolsky. Telegram, Jan. 30-Feb. 12, 1910.*

As I am indisposed, I have asked Korff [1] to give your communication to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Minister took note of the declaration with the greatest interest and is very thankful for being kept *au courant.* He is prepared to do his utmost to have your proposal accepted at Vienna. He added, however, that he personally had doubts that Aehrenthal would agree to it.

(333) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 30-Feb. 12, 1910.*

This morning Bollati told Korff, in a confidential conversation, that the Italian Government congratulated itself upon the proposals made by Your Excellency to the Vienna Cabinet, since it recognized in these proposals a reinforcement of its own policy. *But, in view of the special interests of Italy in the Adriatic and consequently of her special relations to Turkey, the Cabinet of Rome must ask itself whether the exchange of views between Petersburg and Vienna might not lead to a double understanding to the exclusion of Italy.* Korff declared that this fear was groundless, since your Memorandum clearly emphasizes the fact that a reversion to the Convention of 1897 was precluded, and, that, if a new agreement should be entered upon, this would have to be such that all the Powers interested would be able to become part of it. The best proof was the confidential communication of yesterday. Bollati then asked how and under what conditions the other Powers had been summoned to declare their willingness to join.

(334) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna to Iswolsky. Letter, Feb. 4-17, 1910.*

I wish to express my best thanks to Your Excellency for the letter which informed me of the conversation which has taken

[1] Russian counselor of embassy at Rome.

place with the Austrian Ambassador. As agreed, I called upon Aehrenthal on Monday evening, to learn from him what impression he had received from the latest reports of Berchtold's. My telegram of February 1 gave you a brief report of my conversation with Aehrenthal; this conversation was very friendly and I have not much to add to my telegram. . . . . .

Proceeding to the question which expression should be given to our agreement, the Minister lingered for some time upon this side of the question and told me that from the beginning he had been of the opinion that it would be necessary to limit ourselves to a contact between the two Governments; this contact was necessary in order to avert a dangerous situation in the Balkans. The exchange of notes or any other similar document as suggested by you would, in his opinion, give our *rapprochement* too much the character of an "agreement"—this agreement would have to be postponed to a time when events in the Balkans may make such an agreement necessary. . . . . .

It appeared to me, as I mentioned in my telegram of February 1-14, that Aehrenthal wishes to avoid a communication of our agreement to the other Powers, even though this was not expressly mentioned.

If I do not err, the lack of an exchange of notes or of any other diplomatic instrument, in which our agreement finds expression, does not preclude the possibility of such a communication, since both Cabinets have already exchanged brief documents. Obviously, Aehrenthal's communication would have to accord exactly with what he gave me to understand during our last conversation.

At the close of our conversation, Aehrenthal mentioned the answers which he would return to the other Powers, in the event of his being asked questions regarding the points which we are now discussing as has already been the case with the Italian Government. . . . . .

The Italian Ambassador spoke to me for a moment Monday evening, before my visit to Aehrenthal; he wished to know what Aehrenthal had replied to our last communications, and he seemed rather pessimistic regarding the success of our negotiations with Austria. Avarna seemed to be informed of the basis of our negotiations, and it was precisely the third point, "the peaceful de-

velopment of the smaller Balkan States" which caused his doubt. I replied that inasmuch as the word "peaceful" was added, there was no ground for suspicion.

The French Ambassador had the same doubts at the beginning, since he feared that Aehrenthal might discern something suspicious in this. . . . . .

(335) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 13-26, 1910.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs will consider how he might best support your proposals at Vienna, in accordance with your wishes. He thanks you for the communication and would be glad to know whether you have addressed the same request to the other Powers.

(336) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 13-26, 1910.

M. Pichon is obliged for the confidential communication; he is quite of your opinion and has already given the French Ambassador at Vienna instructions to support you in everything which might help your proposals to triumph.

(337) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Rome. Telegram, Feb.* 14-27, 1910.

Your telegram of February 13-26 *received. We are keeping the Cabinets of Rome, Paris and London informed of our negotiations with Austria, and this also applies to Berlin though in a lesser degree.*

(338) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Letter, Feb.* 16-*March* 1, 1910.

I received your telegram of Feb. 11-24, regarding our negotiations with Austria on Saturday morning, but could find neither Sir Edward Grey nor Sir Charles Hardinge at the Foreign Office that day. I therefore made this important communication to Mr. Tyrell, Grey's private secretary, who enjoys his particular confidence. Without having the authority to be able to give me a final answer, Tyrell told me that the standpoint of the London Cabinet in this question had been so clear from the very beginning that he did not for the moment doubt that Sir Edward would do everything to be useful to us.

And yet, he went on, how shall we do it and what shall we say at Vienna without committing an indiscretion and without confining ourselves to insufficient generalities? He proposed to me that Nicolson be instructed to discuss this question of diplomatic technique with you. I accepted this suggestion. After I had received your telegram, which contains a very happy formula which might be of service to Sir F. Cartwright in his conversations, I called on Hardinge. He confirmed to me the intention of the London Cabinet to give us support. He, too, told me that this action at Vienna was of a very delicate nature and that Aehrenthal will perceive in it, if not mistrust, then at least an interference and a not wholly justifiable curiosity.

Sir Charles then told me that Sir Edward Grey had determined to make use of another pretext in order to beg the Austrian ambassador in London to call upon him and to speak with him after some other affair, no matter what, had been settled. I made free to reply that I believed that Your Excellency would be satisfied with this procedure, since it had the advantage of being less disagreeable to the Vienna Cabinet, and nevertheless achieved the same purpose. This would also have the advantage that Mensdorff,[1] with whom I maintain close relations, would speak to me about this matter.

This will give me the opportunity of telling him that I was very glad to see that the London Cabinet had come to the same conclusion as our own Government: I was aware that it had been wished for a long time in London that contact between St. Petersburg and Vienna be resumed, and that it seemed to me, nay, that I was certain, that a communication to the other Powers relative to the three points agreed upon would not only be expedient but in every way necessary.....

I hope that Your Excellency approves of my speaking in this sense to my Austrian colleague.

(339) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 16-*March* 1, 1910. *No.* 17.

Schön,[2] in his answer to our last communication, has changed his standpoint with regard to your desire to inform all the Great

[1] Austro-Hungarian ambassador at London.
[2] German secretary of foreign affairs.

Powers of the results of our negotiations with Austria. The former feeling of satisfaction seems to have given place to a certain mistrust. He emphasizes, as at first, the reserve shown by Aehrenthal in this matter, and the personal sensitiveness which renders every exercise of German influence difficult, and he gave me to understand, that at heart he shared the opinion of the Austrians that it was inexpedient to transmit a communication to the other Powers at this moment. He thought that this might be done later on, when the *status quo* in the Balkans should be threatened in one form or another. This answer was obviously given after the Secretary of State had made his report to the Emperor.

(340) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 16-*March* 1, 1910. *No.* 19.

I have just made to Aehrenthal the prescribed verbal communication as to the resumption of normal diplomatic relations between the two Powers. The Minister answered me that he is happy to be able to establish the fact that the political principles of both Cabinets were identical in Balkan questions, and added that he would forward the necessary instructions to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg to take up normal relations. With regard to the second part of the *aide mémoire,* Aehrenthal remarked he would once more examine the question, but he did not believe that he could change his former point of view to the effect that it was inexpedient to induce the other Cabinets to join in the Austro-Russian agreement.

The resumption of the contact which permits us to enter into an exchange of opinion as to all political questions of the day, seemed to him to be sufficient for the moment, since the situation in the Balkans was a quiet one. *I remarked that it might after all be better to do this now, since one would be obliged to have recourse to this means if the status quo in the Balkans should be threatened and since it appeared that danger in Greece might not be quite excluded at the moment.* Aehrenthal replied that he would once more examine your proposal.

I do not know whether the British and Italian Ambassadors have been instructed to give us their moral support in overcoming

the opposition of Aehrenthal. As soon as I find this out I shall telegraph you.

(341) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 17-*March* 2, 1910.

Continuation of my telegram No. 19.

The British Ambassador told me yesterday that Sir Edward Grey had determined to use his personal influence with Mensdorff in this question. He added that if in the course of his conversation with Aehrenthal he found it possible to say something in favour of your proposal, he would do this, without letting it appear that he was informed of the progress of the negotiations. As to the Italian Ambassador, he was avoiding, as the French and English representatives told me, every discussion concerning our *rapprochement* with Austria. I would therefore prefer not to speak to him about this for the present.

Aehrenthal is leaving today for several days' stay at Abazzia.

(342) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Iswolsky. Letter, Feb.* 18-*March* 3, 1910.

In consequence of the illness of my chief, I have recently had frequent opportunities to speak with M. Pichon. As I have already telegraphed you, the Minister completely shares your opinion and will do everything in his power to see that a communication to the other Powers be made, which will not leave the slightest doubt as to the nature and the purpose of our reconciliation with the Vienna Cabinet, and which in a way fetters the policy of Austria in the Balkan Peninsula.

M. Pichon is quite in agreement with the three points to which you wish to limit this communication. In his opinion these define the mutual relations of the two Powers in Balkan policy and will facilitate an exchange of views between all Powers in case of sudden political complications.

M. Pichon, however, has not concealed from me his fear that at the present moment when normal relations with Vienna were being restored, Aehrenthal would give his consent to making the agreement public only with the greatest reluctance, for its publication would in too great a degree bind Austria with respect to the other Cabinets and to the public opinion of Europe.

"All the more readily shall we be prepared," M. Pichon added, "to support M. Iswolsky whenever he wishes to carry out such important and necessary demands."

(343) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 25-*March* 10, 1910. *No.* 22.

.....The Austro-Hungarian answer will be sent to you tomorrow by courier; since the situation had not changed, Aehrenthal told me, he saw no reason for changing his opinion that it was inexpedient to communicate to the other Powers the principles respecting Balkan policy which had been accepted by both Governments.....

Aehrenthal believes that such a communication would rather weaken than strengthen the fundamental principles which have been set up. I observed that at all events the principle of the preservation and the consolidation of the new Turkish régime was something new. The Minister hereupon mentioned a little misunderstanding between you and the German Ambassador as to an "alleged secret agreement" which Russia had wished to conclude with Austria-Hungary.[1] He told me that this misunderstanding had been cleared up. It nevertheless appeared to him that you were of the opinion that Vienna, in not wishing to inform the other Powers, desired to give the political contact between Russia and Austria the character of an agreement. This, Aehrenthal said, was hardly correct. He regards our exchange of views as concluded; the result a very happy one and that now it was desirable that public opinion in both countries be properly directed. The Minister closed the conversation by saying that the situation in the Balkans caused him no anxiety and that everything seemed to be in order at Constantinople.

(344) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 6-19, 1910.

Aehrenthal has just handed to me the text of the communication which is destined for the purpose of directing public opinion. Count Berchtold will hand you this text. Publication is to take

[1] The German Government made formal inquiry to this effect, following Russian intimation that Germany's ally, Austria-Hungary, was considering such a "secret agreement."

place Monday in the *Politische Korrespondenz.* Aehrenthal does not consider it necessary that both Governments should make an identical and simultaneous publication.

(345) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, March 7-20, 1910. No. 362.*

After our negotiations with Vienna have resulted in the conformity of the principles of the Russian and the Austrian Balkan policy and normal diplomatic relations have been resumed between the two Governments, I have today communicated this fact to the Ambassadors of Germany, France, England, Italy and Turkey by means of an *aide mémoire* to which I appended the diplomatic correspondence relative to these negotiations. A short résumé will be published tomorrow through the St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency.

(346) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna to Iswolsky. Telegram, March 9-22, 1910. No. 27.*

Your telegram No. 362 was received Sunday night and I did not deem it necessary to communicate the contents to Aehrenthal, as the telegram contained no order to that end. Today, calling on Aehrenthal, who is leaving this evening for Abazzia, he told me that he expected that I would inform him about the Russian *communiqué,* since Count Berchtold had been unable to do this. There was nothing left for me to do than to tell him that I had received no orders to that effect, and that I was also not in possession of the text of this *communiqué.* He then touched upon the fact that Your Excellency had not considered the wish of the Vienna Cabinet in connection with the inexpediency of permitting the other Powers to participate in our agreement. Aehrenthal finally spoke of the article in the *Fortnightly Review* and added that it would have been desirable to have come to an understanding, as he had suggested, regarding the answers to eventual interpellations in the Duma and in the Delegations.

At the close Aehrenthal, in cordial terms, told me how satis-

fied he was that our negotiations for the maintenance of peace had been brought to a successful conclusion.

(347) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Letter, April* 8-21, 1910.

The Turkish Naval Ministry has shown energetic and determined activity during the past year. We ourselves are building no new vessels in the Black Sea and do not even replace the old. Whilst Turkey ostensibly arms against Greece, she is on the point of overtaking us, should we persist in maintaining our present standpoint. At any rate, the Turks have outstripped us with regard to torpedo boats. The vessels purchased in Germany make 35 knots an hour whilst ours cannot make more than 25.

Should the Turks buy the vessels of the Dreadnought type, as our Naval Agent at Paris reported, then the mastery of the Black Sea will pass into the hands of Turkey. But we cannot possibly allow this.

For this would be tantamount to the destruction of Alexander III's useful work.[1] At the same time, the basis of the Russo-Turkish relations would be shifted to our disadvantage. *As long as we are the more powerful in the Black Sea, we are in a position to menace by one means or the other the Bosphorous and the entire Turkish coast. The Turks fear us, esteem the value of favourable relations with us and must needs reckon with our special interests in Asia Minor and Persia, despite all insinuations on the part of Germany.*

But once the Turks, profiting by the present moment, seize the predominance in the Black Sea, which has not happened since the days of Peter the Great, then negotiations must be carried on in quite a different tone, and we shall be forced either to give in to the Turks on these important points, or to accept the challenge. In doing so, however, we should be disarmed from a naval point of view from the very beginning. Which is to be preferred?

(348) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 14-27, 1910. *No.* 200.

I had a confidential conversation with the Grand Vizier to-day

[1] Liberation of Bulgaria and destruction of Turkey as a first class Power in Europe. Should be Alexander "II" not "III."

on the Turkish naval armaments. Prepared for this meeting by our first dragoman, Hakki Pasha told me that the said armaments have no other purpose than Turkey's being able to oppose Greek hostility. Turkey has also to consider the fact of Bulgaria's possessing a small mining fleet. Turkey could not enter into a struggle either with Russia, with France and England or with Austria, nor has she any intention of doing so, since she is protected by her army and by alliances.

The expenditure for the fleet is limited to 5 million Turkish pounds, distributed over ten years. From this sum the voluntary subscriptions and other percentages have to be deducted. It is true that the Naval Minister intends purchasing a 15,000 ton cruiser. The entire programme is, however, to be revised very shortly by the Ministerial Council, as the means at disposal are less than was first believed. Personally, the Grand Vizier considers the Naval Minister's programme to be too comprehensive. The Turkish Government does not by any means intend entering into competition with us, as it is acquainted with our naval programme and also convinced of our friendly feelings.

(349) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, June* 15-28, 1910. *No.* 905.

As the arrival of the Turkish Minister of Finance or of delegates of the Turkish Government is expected very shortly at Paris to confer on the loan, I deem it necessary to communicate to you our standpoint in this matter.

Should it be only a question of raising 250 million francs to cover the current Turkish Budget, then an intervention on our part will be hardly necessary. In such case we could content ourselves with France rendering the loan dependent on the granting of the Samsun-Siwas Railway concession to a Franco-Russian syndicate.

Should the conferences deal with a larger loan, which, after covering the budget deficit, would leave considerable means at the disposal of the Turkish Government, then we shall have to communicate our considerations to France, to whom they are also of importance.

France has an interest in our military superiority over Turkey. Every reinforcement of Turkey's military position, especially on the Caucasian frontier, necessitates corresponding counter-measures on our part; these would necessarily also have an influence on our western frontier as well. *Hence we are of the opinion that it would be both to our and France's interest should we, in conformity with the Paris Cabinet, profit by the lack of money in Constantinople to secure from Turkey obligations restricting Turkey's future military growth.* From a military point of view, the question of the Turkish railway constructions in the Caucasus and Northern Persia,[1] as well as the acquisition of men-of-war, is fraught with especial importance.

It is most important to limit Turkey's freedom of action in this respect. Should the French Government share our views in principle then we must endeavour to find a formula acceptable to Turkey. We ourselves would be willing in this case to renounce our rights in the Samsun-Siwas line in favour of the French members of the syndicate.

I beg you to seek a confidential interview with Pichon, keeping your statements within the margin of a preliminary exchange of opinions. Further negotiations will depend on Pichon's reply, which we hope to receive very shortly.

(350) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Iswolsky. Telegram, June* 17-30, 1910.

Djavid Bey is expected at Paris on Saturday. Pichon is still without news regarding the amount of the Turkish loan. Calculations made by the first Counselor of Finance, M. Laurent, reveal Turkey to need about 600 millions. But Djavid in all probability will only endeavour to raise about half of this sum at first. I have communicated to Pichon the standpoint held by our Government, as well as the tenor of your telegram. He told me it was impossible in principle for the French Government to refuse the loan or to demand an assurance from Turkey that the monies resulting from the loan be used neither for the strengthening of

[1] The Russian sphere of influence, occupied at that time by Russian troops.

the fleet nor the increase of the army. *The French Government nevertheless is firmly resolved to use the loan to secure guarantees from Turkey which will satisfy France, England and Russia. It may also be possible at the same time to prevent the construction of new strategic lines to the detriment of Russia.* The issue of a loan will be impossible in any case, unless the Great Powers acquiesce in the increase of the Turkish Customs Tariff. This will take time and cause protracted discussion. I have the impression that Pichon has been greatly alarmed by your reflections.

(351) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Report, June 24-July 7, 1910.*

In continuation of my telegram of June 17-30, I regard it as my duty to inform you that my statements made a deep impression on Pichon. *He appeared to me to be chiefly disturbed by your suggestion that the reinforcement of the Turkish troops on the Persian and Caucasian frontier would result in an immediate reduction of our military strength on the west boundary of Russia.*[1] He nevertheless deemed it necessary to allude to the impossibility for France to demand Turkish guarantees during the negotiations that the financial means granted at Paris should not be used for armaments. Such a condition would be incompatible with the dignity of the Ottoman Empire; it would be rejected and would serve solely to drive Turkey towards Germany, to enter into a close understanding with the latter and to raise the money elsewhere....

Pichon informed me that he intends to use the loan to demand tangible political concessions from Turkey which would be satisfactory in equal measure to all the three Powers of the Triple Entente.....

(352) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, July 21-Aug. 3, 1910. No. 1139.*

In a personal and friendly conversation with the Turkish Ambassador a few days ago, I asked him whether it was true, as the papers again and again assert, that Turkey had the intention of offi-

[1] German and Austro-Hungarian frontiers.

cially joining the Triple Alliance and that Hakki Pasha would confer on this subject with Aehrenthal at Marienbad.

I remarked at the same time that such reports appeared improbable to me, as it was hardly likely Turkey could have so soon forgotten Austria's part in the Bulgarian declaration of independence [1] and, on the other hand, must certainly still remember Russia's exertions to avert complications for Turkey.

Turkhan Pasha submitted the gist of this conversation to Constantinople, and this morning he read out to me a lengthy telegram in reply, in which Rifaat most emphatically denies these reports and corroborates the intention of the Turkish Government to maintain its unrestricted liberty of action and uphold the very best relations with Russia from whom Turkey has received so many proofs of good-will.

(353) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Telegram, Oct.* 11-24, 1910.

The Minister of Finance has informed me how exceedingly disappointed he is at the abandonment of the loan negotiations at Paris. The demands formulated by the French Government are here considered incompatible with the further independence of Turkey as a State; nor are they by any means in keeping with the moderate amount of the prospective financial operations. It is especially painful for the Minister that France is also opposed to a conclusion of the loan in England, which was already assured. Turkey needs money so badly at present that she will be forced to accept not only German money but the German political stipulations as well, although, according to some reports, these are directed against Russia and England.

The situation is very grave. I presume that even though France considers it impossible to set up easier conditions for the protection of our interests, at least she will not oppose the conclusion of the negotiations between Djavid and Cassel.[2] This would meet not only with Turkish approval but also prevent the

[1] The documents show that Iswolsky used at Sofia the argument that Bulgaria owed her complete independence of Turkey largely, if not entirely, to Russia.
[2] Representing Great Britain in the Bagdad railroad negotiations.

dangerous complications which a success on the part of Germany and Austria in the question of the loan would certainly bring in its train.

(354) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept.* 13-26, 1910.

Thanks to the energetic representations made to Cassel by Hardinge and Mallet,[1] the conclusion of a Turkish loan in London has been rendered impossible for the present. *The London Cabinet has assured Pichon of its future support in this matter, although the British Government unfortunately does not possess the means at the disposal of the Paris Cabinet, that is to say, cannot prohibit the quotation of the loan on the Stock Exchange.*

(355) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct.* 10-23, 1910.

It is deplorable that the French Government found it impossible to safeguard our important interests in the question of the Asia Minor railway constructions by including this matter in the Turkish Loan negotiations. Should these negotiations be of no advantage to us, then they should at least not be directly inimical to our interests. It would now appear, however, that the Turks attribute the difficulties put in their way not so much to financial conditions at Paris as to our hostile attitude. The Grand Vizier plainly told this to the French Ambassador; all the other Ministers are of the same opinion, and this conception has already re-acted on the negotiations between the Russian Embassy and the Sublime Porte. As the French Ambassador here pertinently remarked, if the Turks do not receive the necessary 150 millions at Paris then they will find them at Berlin. The enhancement of German influence at Constantinople is of no especial importance to the French, but for us most untimely complications of a political, military and economic nature may ensue. Hence, it appears desirable to me to prevail on France not to impose such stringent conditions and to refrain for the present from interrupting the negotiations, the course of which is impeded by personal influences of all kinds.

[1] British ambassador at Constantinople.

The French themselves consider a loan of 150 millions to be completely covered by the Constantinople Customs revenues. Germany will therefore gladly advance the sum. Difficulties only ensue on account of the French demands relating to the future administration of the French[1] finances. France should, however, out of friendship for us, content herself in this intricate question with a gradual procedure and seek to arrive at an understanding with Turkey.

[1] We deal here evidently with a typographical error or a slip of pen or mind. What the ambassador meant is "Turkish" finances, or if not that the French loans made to Turkey, which were already under the management of a foreign commission, known as the "Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt."

IV

SAZONOFF AND THE BALKAN LEAGUE

(September 1910—November 1911)

(356) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Sofia. Telegram, Sept.* 15-28, 1910.

You did right to call Malinoff's attention to the necessity of a rapprochement with Serbia in view of the military convention concluded between Turkey and Roumania. I have spoken in the same sense to the Bulgarian Minister here and added that such rumours prove what care must be exercised by Bulgaria in the present troubled times. I on my part have to point out that, in spite of Paléologue's [1] assertion, Paris does not consider the existence of a Turco-Roumanian military convention as proved.

I share this view of the French Government, but in spite of this consider Bulgaria's position as no less dangerous. The attitude of the Roumanian Government in Balkan questions has been made clear and the feeble *démenti* which has been opposed to the existence of a military convention strengthens us in our belief of Roumania's intentions in the event of an armed conflict between Bulgaria and Turkey. [2]

(357) *Prince Ouroussoff to the Russian Ambassador at Vienna. Confidential Report, Oct.* 26-*Nov.* 8, 1910.

The meeting of our Czar with Emperor Wilhelm has found a glad response in all circles here. This meeting is regarded as an

[1] Attached to French Foreign Office.

[2] Sazonoff appears no longer sure that the basis on which Russia reached an understanding with Austria-Hungary—the preservation of the *status quo* in the Balkans—would stand much strain, as is shown in the documents.

additional pledge of the preservation of peace, even though, as the Viennese papers observe, peace had not been directly threatened. It is remarkable that the German-Austrian press speaks of the Potsdam meeting as though Austria-Hungary had participated in it herself. One might also draw the conclusion from Aehrenthal's words that this meeting directly affected Austrian policy.

Of course we need not wonder at, nor be dissatisfied with this. On the contrary: if the Vienna Cabinet, even though in secret it may attempt to free itself from dependence on Berlin, follows Germany along this path, this must be regarded as a proof of its sincere desire to draw closer to Russia.

It is likely that Vienna would prefer to achieve the last-named result directly, but would reconcile itself to the thought of also using our improved relations to Germany for this purpose. This consideration once more compels me to revert to the thought to which I have already frequently given expression: it would be desirable to a certain degree to come to an understanding with the Vienna Cabinet, in case of complications in the Balkans and to make use of the inclination to such an understanding which exists here.[1]

It is, in my opinion, a foregone conclusion that one should seek to effect such *a preventive agreement by means of direct negotiations without outside mediation.* The present moment seems auspicious to me. Even if unexpected and insurmountable difficulties should be raised on the part of the Austrians, an unsuccessful attempt would prove useful none the less, since the insurmountable opposition of the Vienna Cabinet would reveal to us its real plans and purposes.

(358) *The Russian Minister in Greece to Sazonoff. Secret Report, Jan. 2-15, 1911.*

My Bulgarian colleague has confidentially informed me as follows:

After a short conversation relating to one of the pending questions, the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs told him that he hoped to discuss "serious questions" with Hadjimisheff[2] in the near

[1] Renewal of a similar effort made by Iswolsky in the spring of the same year.
[2] Bulgarian minister at Athens.

future; whereupon the latter replied that he would be perfectly ready to enter upon an exchange of views with Griparis.[1]

Obviously, it concerns the question of opening negotiations with a view to a rapprochement between Greece and Bulgaria. However, as the Bulgarian Minister had so far received no corresponding instructions, he immediately informed his Government of the statements made by Griparis. Hadjimisheff protests that the Government at Sofia is desirous of establishing friendly relations with Greece. As a proof he mentioned his appointment to Athens, where, up to the present, Bulgaria had only been represented by a Chargé d'Affaires.

But "an agreement" with the Cabinet of Athens (he even used the term "alliance") is not compatible with the interests of Bulgaria. On the one hand, he said, because written agreements frequently lead to the contrary result, and, on the other, because Bulgaria is desirous of being at peace with all the Balkan States, and chiefly aims at improving her relations to Turkey. For, although these latter are quite normal, they are not such as the Bulgarian Government wishes them to be.

Passing to the question of the relations between Greece and Bulgaria, Hadjimisheff told me that he failed to understand on what basis such an arrangement might be concluded, all the more as Bulgaria would only be disposed to conclude a commercial treaty with Greece after it had first settled its trade relations with the Great Powers.....

(359) *The Russian Ambassador at Vienna to Sazonoff. Confidential Report, Feb.* 2-15, 1911.

Having read with the greatest attention and impartiality the reports of our representatives at Sofia and Belgrade as well as of our Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, I come to the conclusion that all news of the Serbian Government derived from secret sources is to be accepted only with reservations. *The weak side of the Serbians is their constant need of political intrigues which are devoted to but one purpose—not to admit good relations on the part of Russia to those Powers with which Serbia's relations are bad. The whole atmosphere of Belgrade is saturated with unjustifiable sensitiveness*

[1] Greek minister of foreign affairs.

and excitement. The Serbian Government will not concede that Russia should conclude an agreement with Austria upon any basis whatsoever; if it is not the Serbian Government that calls our attention to the deep and treacherous designs of Austria, then it is the Serbian General Staff. At this moment when the relations of Serbia to Turkey are by no means satisfactory, there is no doubt in the minds of the Serbians that Turkey has concluded some pact with Austria.

I am entirely of the opinion of our Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople that Austria-Hungary has no design upon the Sandjak.[1] I have arrived at this conclusion not only on account of the repeated declarations of the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Delegations that Austria has no intention of continuing the policy of territorial acquisitions in the Balkans, but also by reason of the consideration that only thus could an agreement with Russia be reached, which is a direct political necessity for Austria.

The *rapprochement* with France which would be so desirable for Austria is also possible only under these circumstances.

The union of all Slav nationalities must naturally be the goal of Russian policy, but one asks oneself how is this to be achieved, now that the King and the Government of Bulgaria manifest such distrust of Serbia?

I consider it to be my duty to say, that I am entirely of the opinion of our Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, that we must seriously consider the necessity of arriving at a new agreement with Vienna, in order to protect our interests as far as possible in a peaceful manner. It depends entirely upon the Imperial Government to judge when the favourable moment for a new Balkan agreement of this kind shall have arrived. *On me merely devolves the duty of rendering the Balkan intrigues which are directed against such an agreement, ineffective and which might easily, and contrary to our desire, lead to a complete rupture with Austria.*

(360) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb.* 15-28, 1911.

The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs has to-day entered into a detailed exchange of opinions with me, which aims at dis-

[1] Sandjak of Novi-Bazar—as was proven later.

pelling Russia's lack of confidence in Turkish policies. His statements, which I reproduce below, refer to three questions, namely:

1.) Pan-Islamism;
2.) Persia;
3.) the railways of Asia Minor.

Rifaat Pasha also touched on the groundlessness of the Russian fears regarding Turkish armaments.

1.) The Minister declared that neither the Turkish Government nor the Committee of Saloniki sought to further Pan-Islamism, as they are fully aware that such a policy would necessarily lead to dangerous complications with Russia, England and France.[1]

2.) The foundation of Turkey's policy with regard to Persia reposes in the recognition of the independence and territorial integrity of this country, Turkey at the same time having special commercial and frontier interests. Turkey wishes to establish final frontiers with Persia as soon as possible, by placing the mutual territorial claims and documentary evidence before a special frontier commission.....

3.) After Rifaat had referred to the confidential communication of October 31, 1909, concerning the replacement of the Treaty of 1900 by a new one, he told me that he would communicate to me several confidential statements relevant thereto very shortly.

(361) *The Same to the Same. Report, April* 2-15, 1911.

As I informed you by telegraph, the Turkish Government, after lengthy negotiations lasting almost a year and a half, has ordered two Dreadnoughts. Thus early in 1913 Turkish vessels will appear in the Black Sea which will by far surpass ours, and should Russia not possess by then a certain number of larger armoured vessels in the Black Sea, then the mastery in these waters will pass from Russia to Turkey. The political effect of such an event has long been clearly recognized. We are now confronted by the

[1] Russia, however, promoted Pan-Slavism with might and main, as shown by these documents.

fact of Turkey having ordered the vessels, and, reluctant though we may be to do so, we must immediately and unhesitatingly take the necessary counter-measures. Otherwise we shall be forced even now to haul down our flag in the Black Sea in favour of the Turkish Crescent.

The Grand Vizier certainly impressed upon me that this Turkish measure was not directed against us and he declared his readiness to give us all possible guarantees that Turkey will allow no foreign men-of-war to pass through to the Black Sea. But even if these assurances were embodied in a convention, they would only be of importance to us in so far as they are based on the fact of absolute superiority of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea.

I may add that the order for the Turkish Dreadnoughts reckons with Russia not being able to construct similar vessels in the course of twenty months, as is possible with the Turkish orders in England and Germany. This assumption is based in turn on the publication of the Duma debates and on several most unpatriotic utterances in the Russian press.

We cannot permit such an event to take place, if only Russia be ready to make the necessary sacrifices.

(362) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb. 26-March* 11, 1911.

The Bulgarian Minister at Sofia [1] went to meet his Sovereign on the latter's return from Vienna, and has made me the confidential communication that, as a result of the conversation which he had had with King Ferdinand, he had gained the firm conviction that His Majesty was but very indifferently satisfied with the meeting he had had with the Austrian Emperor, since it had led to no definite results. According to the Bulgarian Minister's opinion, this will contribute towards a cooling of the relations between the two countries and towards strengthening Russophile tendencies. The truth of my conclusions Tocheff said, will perhaps already become evident in the near future.

[1] M. Hartwig probably meant the Bulgarian minister at Belgrade. The term "Bulgarian minister at Sofia" has no meaning. Tocheff was at that time in the Bulgarian Cabinet. Together with Daneff and Malinoff he was an old stand-by of the Russians.

(363) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, April* 12-25, 1911.[1]

In one of my conversations with Cruppi [2] I touched on the question of the loan just concluded in France by the City of Budapest. This financial operation has been carried through with the help of the Crédit Lyonnais. Such municipal loans do not usually require Government permission in order to be quoted on the Paris Exchange. *Thus the French Foreign Ministry had not officially the possibility of preventing the loan. Notwithstanding this there is no doubt, that the Crédit Lyonnais did not act in this question without the silent consent of the French Government. I did not conceal from Cruppi that the granting of a loan by French banks would call forth an unpleasant impression in Russia,* where this would naturally be regarded as the first step towards the financing of other Hungarian loans. In order to make the necessary impression upon Cruppi, I have submitted to him the following general considerations regarding this particular case.

"Of late," I said, "I have been forced to call on several occasions the serious attention of the French Government *to the injury done to the vital interests of Russia by the financial projects of French banks. In consequence of her enormous extension and the peculiarity of her geographical situation, Russia may be attacked at various points of her periphery, and she is not equally strong on all her fronts.*[3]

"Such enterprises, as, for example, the railway line from Chinchow to Aigun or the net of railways in Asia Minor, would impose upon us immense expenditures in connection with the defense of our Asiatic frontiers, and this would weaken our military position along our western frontier, which would be contrary to the common interests of France and Russia. *Every loan granted to Austria-Hungary, or even to Hungary, likewise weakens the position of Russia and in consequence that of the Dual Alliance. It is exceedingly dangerous to yield to the illusion which is so widespread here, namely that Hungary might form a counterpoise to the influence of*

[1] This and the following document are reproduced here to show the diplomatic aspect of international finance.

[2] French minister of foreign affairs. Was not an ardent Russophile when he first took office.

[3] Russia had to reckon with attacks on her west front only, to wit: the frontiers of Germany and Austria-Hungary

Germany. The last Bosnian crisis has shown that in decisive moments Hungary will always place herself at the side of Austria and Germany." [1]

Only within the last few days, we heard Ribot speak eloquently of the necessity of a more uniform and logical policy for the three Entente powers, and Cruppi himself pointed out that it was necessary to apply this political combination in reality and, so to speak, day by day. It appears to me that foreign loans and financial operations represent a field in which the higher political interests of France and Russia must be brought into harmony, and it would be in the highest degree regrettable if the efforts of the French financiers to attain personal profits, would gain the upper hand over the higher aims of the two allied Powers.

The Minister replied that he quite shared my opinion and that he was prepared to take this standpoint in every individual instance. *As to the Budapest loan, this was, so to speak, of a special and private nature and there was no possibility for the French Government to oppose this loan.* Yet he would guarantee that this loan would in no wise imply the financing of Hungary for general needs of the state.

"I am very glad," said he, "that you have touched on this question and have given me arguments of which I shall make use at the proper moment."

In spite of this categorical explanation of Cruppi's, I permit myself to express the thought that perhaps *the greatest difficulty of the Russo-French relations consists in bringing the interests of those financial circles which are so influential here, into harmony with the general tendency of the policies of the Dual Alliance.*

In this special instance it was scarcely possible to prevent the French banks from participating in the Budapest Loan, since they had already invested such important sums in various Hungarian enterprises. *French savings which seek an investment in foreign loans and undertakings render the battle with the cosmopolitan tendencies of capital* [2] *here an extraordinary difficult one.* It is therefore our duty to pay close attention to the projects of French financial circles and in such cases in which our interests are seriously threatened,

[1] Naturally, being the other half of the Dual-Monarchy.

[2] Favorite phrase of Russian diplomatists to identify Jewish financial groups, who opposed Russian diplomacy because of the treatment Russia gave the Jew.

we must in good time exert an energetic pressure upon the French Government in order to prevent a realization of these plans.

(364) *Memorial by M. N. Rafalowitch*[1] *regarding Austrian Influence in French Banks. May* 14, 1914.

With regard to the relations of the leading Parisian banks with the Austrian world of finance, two considerations are manifest. First the general character of these relations, and, second, their constant weakening.

In consequence of political events, Austria has during recent years had no access to the Paris market, and neither the efforts of her representatives, nor her close connections with the French world of finance, have helped her in this respect. The Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas has its representatives in the management of the Austrian Bodenkreditgesellschaft of which the well-known political financier Sieghardt is the head.

In the Austrian Länderbank there are likewise French members of the Committee, among others Crozier,[2] the former French Ambassador in Vienna, who also has a seat in the Administrative Council of the Société Général, in which a conspicuous part is also played by the Austrian Adler. Adler is in reality the head of a department of this enterprise, even though he does not bear this official title. The former German subject Ullmann occupies an important position in the Crédit Lyonnais;—although he entertains no immediate relations with Austria, he stands very close to the Diskontogesellschaft of Berlin which exercises a great influence at Vienna. The Crédit Lyonnais has on several occasions circulated Austrian and Hungarian values on the Paris market and has disposed of treasury certificates of these two states among its clients.

There is no need of mentioning Rothschild, for, though he is very much interested in Austrian business, his influence in Paris is steadily diminishing. Finally, the Union Parisienne has a Balkan bank which depends directly upon Viennese and Budapest financial firms and which is under the local control of the Austrian Donner. *It is essential, above all things, to remark that up to recently the French*

[1] Chief the Russian Secret Political Police in France.

[2] Of whom Iswolsky complained during the Balkan crisis as being not as sharp with the Austrians as he was expected to be.

banks in the Balkans have proceeded in common with the Austrians, who have thereby been able to exploit French capital. The fundamental changes in the political structure of the Balkan Peninsula are bound to influence the Franco-Austrian relations in an unfavourable sense.

In order to attain this end, we on our part must proceed in a very systematic fashion. In this we must discriminate between the efforts of the Austrians to float their values on the Paris Bourse, and to proceed hand in hand with the French banks in the Balkans. So far as the former efforts are concerned, these need not seriously disquiet us since they represent an "attempt with inadequate means." *The French banks have altogether too great a fear of the interference of their government, and of the protest of public opinion, to determine light-heartedly upon such an operation which might be reduced to nothingness by a single newspaper article or by a single step on the part of Russia.*[1]

As an example of this, one might cite the futile attempt to realize a rather considerable sum for the Austrian Treasury by settling the old dispute about the Austrian Southern railways in a sense favourable to the French owners of the stock. *This attempt was forestalled last year*—even its execution was dubious—*through the publication of a suitable article in the Echo de Paris.*

With reference to the co-operation of the French and Austrian banks, we may here too be able to play a very useful rôle. *When for example, the Austrian banks, with a view to eventual participation, applied the other day to the French group which is examining the question of the internationalisation of the Eastern Railway in Serbia, it sufficed for the Russian representative to declare that the Russian group would not participate in such a combination, to induce the French to give the Austrians a negative answer.*

When one French group reproaches another with being too close to the Austrians this is usually only a *ruse de guerre. We on our part must recognize the fact that all of the chief French groups stand very close to Austria and that it would be difficult to tell which of them are most under Austrian influence. We must set up the one general rule,—that we must not leave the French alone with the Austrians in any questions or countries in which we have an interest.* Where the

[1] A very interesting statement in the light of international relations.

French are to co-operate with Russian elements there will no longer be any room for Austrians. Besides, this means to us the one possibility of being informed at the right moment of everything that we wish to prevent.

(365) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 19-*April* 1, 1911. *No.* 110.

I have been informed by the Bulgarian Minister that the formation of a Cabinet with Tocheff at its head, and including followers of Daneff, has created an excellent impression in Turkish circles.

The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs has confidentially told me that on the part of Turkey all measures were being taken to strengthen the good relations with Bulgaria by assuring order, personal security and equality of rights to the Bulgarian population of Macedonia, a fact which, as we believe, ought to be of interest to the Bulgarian Government.

(366) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 20-*April* 2, 1911.

The King of Montenegro has caused the communication to be transmitted here that he fully concurs in the point of view taken by the Serbian Government, both as regards the general political situation, and also as concerns the aims to be pursued by the joint Serbo-Montenegrin policy. The King will consider the note to be sent in reply by Serbia, the contents of which are intended to form the basis of an agreement to be concluded between the two countries.

(367) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 26-*April* 8, 1911.

In the course of a long and frank interview with Daneff, the latter told me that he could not quite share Geshoff's views as to the Bulgaro-Serbian relations. *According to his firm conviction, Bulgaria must be united to Serbia by insoluble ties*—in her own interest it is of the greatest importance for Bulgaria to deter Serbia from possible inclination towards Austria, and thus to erect a wall to Austrian aspirations in the Balkans, chiefly in the direction of

Saloniki, which for Bulgaria also is a much longed-for goal of aspirations.[1] . . . . . .

(368) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 14-27, 1911. *No.* 80.

Provided you do not object, it is my intention to go to Sofia in order to confer, conjointly with our Minister, with the Bulgarian Ministers and Daneff, with whom I have long been personally acquainted. This would make an excellent impression here and would perhaps still further facilitate the negotiations between Bulgaria and Serbia.

(369) *Neratoff, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the Russian Minister at Sofia. Telegram, June* 25-*July* 8, 1911.

If you deem it necessary for local reasons, we have no objection to your denying, in concert with the Bulgarian Government, through the press, all rumours of the existence of a military convention of 1902 as being unfounded.[2]

(370) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Jan.* 16-29, 1913. *No.* 136.

(Same telegram sent to Paris.)
Absolutely secret and strictly confidential.

I request you to confidentially inform the Minister of Foreign Affairs as follows:

The existence of a military convention between Austria and Roumania having been at the time ascertained, a treaty was concluded between Russia and Bulgaria in 1902, in virtue of which Bulgaria pledged herself to assist us in the case of a war with one of the Powers of the Triple Alliance, whereas we, on our part, pledged ourselves to guarantee Bulgaria's territorial integrity. *This treaty has so far benefited us exclusively, as Bulgaria was bound by its stipulations.* We were asked to do nothing more but what for political and economic reasons we should have been unable to refuse Bulgaria even if no such treaty had existed. Now, however, in view of the threatening attitude assumed by Roumania we have

[1] Diplomatic bait.
[2] That this military convention actually existed is shown by Document No. 370.

deemed it advisable to issue through our Minister at Bucharest a friendly warning to the Roumanian Government, of which you may likewise confidentially inform the Foreign Minister. We, for our part, consider it very desirable that the Cabinets of Paris and London should bring in their turn their influence to bear upon Bucharest.

(371) *The Russian Ambassador at Vienna to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept. 25-Oct. 8, 1911. No. 42.*

Strictly confidential. Geshoff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, called on me today, and informed me of the interview which he had had with the French and the Austrian Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Both appeared to him to be optimistic and, as he alleges, told him that Italy, in order to make a quick end of the Tripolitan question, would agree to recognize the nominal sovereignty of Turkey in Tripoli and to pay her an indemnity. *Geshoff then went on to tell me that our Ministers at Sofia and Belgrade insist most energetically upon the conclusion of an alliance between Bulgaria and Serbia under the protectorship of Russia.*

Geshoff is perfectly clear on the point that a Balkan Confederation of this kind, formed in these present disturbed times, is bound to incense Austria towards Bulgaria and Serbia, and in this case, Roumania and Turkey would stand behind Austria. Before resolving upon such a step, Geshoff wishes to know upon what guarantees on the part of Russia, Bulgaria could count. . . . . .

(372) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 1911.*

Until yesterday, King Ferdinand had told Geshoff nothing about the conversations which he has had at Vienna. On the other hand, he informed Daneff that he had not talked about politics with "the sick, old Emperor." He has had a long talk with Aehrenthal in the course of which the latter tried to discover Bulgaria's intentions and is alleged to have told the King that on principle and under certain conditions Austria would have no objections to Bulgaria extending its frontiers in the direction of Macedonia. Hereupon, the King gave an evasive answer. He has noticed that

both Aehrenthal and the political circles at Vienna had become concerned and alarmed.

King Ferdinand has in the course of the last few months kept up constant and frank relations with Daneff, thus emphasizing, so to say, his reserve towards Geshoff. Daneff told me that, as far as he had been able to judge, King Ferdinand has more and more convinced himself in the course of the last few weeks that constant and close relations for their mutual support were being kept up between Russia, France and England, and he is convinced that the forces of these three Powers are superior to those of Germany and Austria.

The recognition of this fact may, as Daneff and Geshoff hope, induce the King to finally agree to a treaty with Serbia and Russia, and then there is no return possible, either for him or Bulgaria. I entertain the same hopes; however I still fear that what may be called the almost constitutional irresolution on the part of the decidedly neurasthenic Monarch, will finally yet gain the upper hand. I further fear that the exceptional marks of favour heaped by the King upon that most convinced of Russophiles, Daneff, will finally end in Geshoff seeing himself obliged to retire and that, in consequence, the coalition between the Zankowists and the Narodniki, which at present is so very powerful, will be weakened.

(373) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct.* 1-14, 1911. *No.* 631.

After the ceremony in Parliament, the new Foreign Minister Assim Bey in the course of a lengthy conversation begged me to support him in his endeavours to bring about a rapprochement with Russia, a policy wherein he differs from his predecessor. The Minister also acquainted me with the Sultan's wish to despatch a special delegation to the Crimea to welcome the Russian Czar. I informed Assim Bey of Sazonoff's intention to spend some time in the Crimea. The Minister complained of the obstructions put in the way of the food supplies for the inhabitants of the Yemen and the Hedjaz by English cruisers and requested your intervention in the interests of the Russian and Mahommedan pilgrims. It appears to me that the new Minister might be a valuable support to us.

(374) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 2-15, 1911. *No.* 634.

The Bulgarian Minister made to-day the following communication to me:

The new Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Assim Bey, has given him to understand that he only accepted the post on the condition that Turkey would endeavour to come to a special understanding with Bulgaria, and that the Grand Vizier accepted this condition with great willingness. . . . . .

(375) *The Russian Ambassador in London to the Russian Foreign Office. Telegram, Oct.* 21-*Nov.* 3, 1911. *No.* 257.

Confidential. Grey informed me that the Turkish Ambassador here has proposed to him in the name of his Government a close rapprochement between England and Turkey, adding that the Sublime Porte is first approaching England in this matter and would then extend the understanding to Russia and France, on the condition that Turkey receives active support in the maintenance of her sovereign rights in Tripoli.[1] Grey told me he had replied in the friendliest manner, in view of the present negotiations of our Ambassador with the Sublime Porte, emphasizing that he naturally welcomed the idea of a permanent and definite understanding between Turkey and the Powers of the Triple Entente, but that he considered the present time hardly favourable for negotiations, as the conditions formulated by Turkey could not be brought into harmony with the principle of England's neutrality. Grey regards it as necessary to inform me and the French Ambassador of the Turkish overtures. He furthermore made the Turkish Ambassador understand that a rapprochement between England and Turkey would necessarily include the regulation of various pending questions, such as for instance, that of the Bagdad Railway.

[1] Threatened at that time by Italy.

V

RUSSIA AND GREAT BRITAIN AND THE STRAITS QUESTION

(October 1911—April 1912)

(376) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff, the Russian Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs. Telegram, Oct.* 10-23, 1911. *No.* 245.

Your personal letter received.

M. Cambon has been instructed to sound Grey on the question of the Straits [1] and rumours concerning the negotiations at Constantinople that have transpired in the press. I have found it necessary to make use of the authorization given me. I told Grey that the Russian Government believes the moment is come for establishing closer and friendlier relations with the Sublime Porte, and that, in consequence, our Ambassador had made the following communication, in a strictly personal manner, to Said Pasha:

Russia undertakes to induce the Balkan States to maintain lasting peaceful relations with the Sublime Porte; Russia does not exclude the possibility of a Russian guarantee for Constantinople and the territory surrounding it; The Sultan, on his part, would then, by his own decision, allow Russian men-of-war free passage through the straits.[2]

I have explained this condition by alluding to near momentous changes in the Mediterranean and I have declared that the form chosen by us for such an arrangement would, in our opinion, make it superfluous to enter in an immediate revision of the treaties. To

[1] Bosphorus and Dardanelles.
[2] The documents show that this was not the case.

this I have added considerations as to the advantages that would result from such an arrangement for the Entente Powers. I have declared that the uncertainty concerning the issue of the ministerial crisis in Constantinople has been the reason for Your Excellency not taking any further step in the matter at present. I have added that the Russian Government entertains the hope, in the interest of our plan being realized, as well as in consideration of political circumstances in general, to be able to count on the support of France and England in Constantinople.

I have asked Grey to consider my statement as one made in strictest confidence, France only excepted. The eventuality of some kind of compensation for England was not mentioned by me. Grey answered that he is ready to support in Constantinople the solution of the Straits question mentioned in his memorandum of October 18th, 1908. As to the new form proposed by us, he has reserved his answer, being obliged to examine it in the light of the treaties and to lay the entire matter of the treaties themselves before the Cabinet. He told me that he saw the importance of this affair, and that, for this reason, he must examine it carefully. I have not mentioned any other question.

Grey will telegraph to O'Beirne.[1]

(377) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Oct.* 10-23, 1911.

After his return from Paris, Cambon, with customary courtesy, communicated to me a report of Bompard's [2] containing details as to the beginning of our Ambassador's negotiations at Constantinople. Likewise he has let me know a report of the French chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg regarding a conversation with Your Excellency on the same subject.

He seemed to be as well informed as myself, regarding the state of affairs. He likewise told me that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs had instructed him to ascertain the views of the British Government on this subject.

Since Grey returned only today, Cambon addressed himself to Nicolson. The Under-secretary gave as his personal opinion, that

[1] British chargé d'affaires at Petrograd.
[2] French ambassador at Constantinople.

the views of the British Cabinet have not changed since 1908. Yet he doubts that the moment is well chosen, particularly in view of the fact that Turkey is at war [1] and that the fate of the Turkish Ministry is not yet decided.

As the papers publish telegrams about negotiations between Russia and Turkey, I thought myself free to make use of the authorisation contained in your letter, all the more since Cambon told me, on the strength of the report of the French chargé d'affaires, that I would be instructed to make to the London Cabinet a communication on this subject.

More protracted delay would have caused surprise here and would have been all the more out of place, as the British Government had been consulted on this question. Yet I do not think that Cambon has read Bompard's report to Nicolson.

Immediately after his return, Grey asked me to come to see him. He first spoke to me about Persian questions, and I have just given you a report on this part of our conversation by wire. Later on I decided to raise the question of the Straits, all the more so as, in the course of our conversation about Persia, I had convinced myself, *how highly Sir Edward values the Entente and how firmly determined he is to preserve it and to avoid everything that might endanger its existence.*

I deemed it expedient to touch at first only on the purely political aspects of this question and to refrain at present from discussing the economic side, as this concerns the British interests less directly.

I told Sir Edward I had been authorized to make a confidential communication, precisely as our Ambassador at Paris had been authorized to make one to the French Government. He probably would not be surprised to hear that the Russian Government considers the moment to have arrived for establishing better relations between Russia and Turkey than heretofore,[2] that the general situation makes this necessary, and, furthermore, that in case of such a rapprochement taking place, the first Powers to profit by it in Constantinople would be England and France. The Russian Gov-

[1] With Italy in Tripoli.
[2] Because Turkey was at war with Italy.

ernment was determined to proceed only with the greatest deliberation. Your Excellency was not fully persuaded that the present moment is propitious, and that therefore for the present our Ambassador[1] was instructed only with approaching Said Pasha in a personal manner with our proposal.

I told Sir Edward that our Ambassador had carried out these instructions and that the principal points of the pact, concerning which Tcharikoff had sounded the Turkish Government, were the following: Energetic steps to be taken by Russia in regard to the Balkan Powers in order to create on the basis of the present *status quo* a condition of permanent Peace between these Powers and Turkey.

Russia might perhaps go so far as to guarantee the town of Constantinople and the surrounding territory to Turkey.[2]

In return for this, Russia would expect the Sultan to allow upon his own authority once and for all time Russian men-of-war free passage through the Straits without these ships being allowed to stop in the Straits.

I told Sir Edward that we had chosen this form, because every other form would have necessitated a tedious revision of the treaties and created difficulties resulting from such a procedure. I also added, that we hoped to be able to count upon the acquiescense of England and her support in Constantinople; according to my knowledge the French Government had received a similar request in a favourable manner and had assured us of the full sympathy of France with Russia's plan.

Sir Edward listened to me with visible interest. He answered immediately that he was ready to support in Constantinople the project, as described in the memorandum delivered to M. Iswolsky on October 18, 1908. This project had been approved at the time by the British Cabinet and he would therefore be able to act immediately.

Without directly excluding the contents of this memorandum, I remarked that the project which is now mentioned to Sir Edward was different. He answered that he was ready to act in the sense

[1] At Constantinople.

[2] A method to gain control of the city and straits, as made evident by these documents.

of the memorandum, but that he could not give me an immediate answer on a proposal, since that would have to be examined from the viewpoint of the existing treaties, as well as be submitted to the approval of the Cabinet.

Sir Edward added that the intention of effecting a rapprochement with Turkey was in itself of the highest importance and must be carefully considered by the Cabinet. I thanked him for his communication, adding that I had absolutely no intention of insisting on a quick settlement of this question; my orders were, above all, to inquire what point of view the British Government adopts at present concerning the Straits.

The only personal remark made by Sir Edward was to the effect, that it would not be easy for the British Government to guarantee a part of her territory to Turkey.

I do not think that Sir Edward was in any way prepared for this conversation. He had only just arrived and had received several other diplomats before me. From his words I could infer, that the London Cabinet—although even in 1908 England was not averse on principle to a modification of the régime of the Straits as determined by existing treaties, but deemed only the time unpropitious—today no longer offers the objections that our plan is not in accord with the times. It declares its readiness to act immediately in the spirit of the formula then agreed upon, but desires that the new formula proposed by the Russian Government should be examined.

(378) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Neratoff. Telegram, Oct.* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 655.

Confidential. I thank you for the information which I shall bear in mind during my further dealings with Said Pasha and I will send you a detailed report as soon as possible. I thank you also for informing Grey of our negotiations, as the British Ambassador told me today. He added, that Grey has confirmed his declarations of the year 1908. I consequently informed Lowther in the same measure as Bompard, accentuating at the same time the private and confidential character of my conversations with the Grand Vizier, so that the Russian Government retains full freedom of fixing the program and the contents of eventual official

negotiations later on, as well as the text of the arrangements that are to come up for discussion.

At present a friendly understanding has been reached between the three Entente Powers. Lowther told me in confidence that up to the present no steps in the sense of a rapprochement with England have been taken by the Turkish Government. But it is clear that an agreement between England and Turkey, to which France would become a party, might form the basis of such a rapprochement, and this agreement would create in the Eastern Mediterranean a situation similar to that existing in the Western part in virtue of the agreement between England, France and Spain. The local press considers the possibility of approaching England, and, through England, Russia. We are still of opinion that Said Pasha is at present negotiating with Germany.

(379) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Oct.* 12-25, 1911. *No.* 1589.

Your telegram 245 received. Personal.

In a general way we are pleased with Grey's first declaration, but we request you to inform us, as to the extent of the reservations made by him. What does he understand by a "new" formula proposed by us and what "treaties" in particular does he refer to?

(380) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Confidential Letter, Oct.* 12-25, 1911.

. . . . . I asked Nicolson his opinion about my conversation with Grey concerning the Bosphorus and Turkey. He answered that it was very interesting, important and in the main—excellent. He told me Grey had telegraphed to Lowther to apprise Tcharikoff so that the three Ambassadors might get into touch. Nicolson asked me if the letter addressed by Tcharikoff to Said Pasha contained a comprehensive project. I said I was not quite sure about this, and added that for the sake of clearness I had not mentioned in my conversation with Grey the less important economical questions, but that I thought it would be well to inform him that the increase of the customs duty by four per cent, about which there existed an agreement with England and France, was not being discussed during these negotiations.

Nicolson as well as Cambon were very grateful for this communication, inasmuch as Bompard's letter contains a not very clear reference to this question. Afterwards, Sir Arthur asked me how I pictured such a negotiation to myself, as it concerned a territorial guarantee whilst Turkey is at war; if the negotiations have results, when would the agreement come into force? This was important from the Italian point of view and might create difficulties between us and Italy. I replied that I could not give a definite answer, but that I was convinced that our present relations with Italy excluded the possibility of any unfriendly act towards that country.

Nicolson is not convinced that the present moment is well chosen and fears that Turkey will use these negotiations against Italy. However he did not insist upon this, and I mention his remark only because it deserves attention. This must also be said of another question, not mentioned by Nicolson but by Cambon—the question of the "Capitulations."[1] He does not think that France and England would consent today to the abolishment of the capitulations.

(381) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 13-26, 1911. *No.* 250.

Your telegram No. 1589 received.

I used the expression "a new formula" in order to imply the free passage of our ships through the Straits as now described by you. Grey has declared his readiness to support, if we so desired, the passage as described in the memorandum of 1908. As our present proposal differs from this memorandum, he begs us to give him time to examine this question from the point of view of the treaties, which determine the present régime of the Straits. In this sense I have spoken of "treaties."

(382) *Private Letter from Neratoff to Benckendorff. Oct.* 20-*Nov.* 2, 1911. No. 692.

We learn with satisfaction from your report, as well as from that of M. Iswolsky, that our intentions with regard to the Straits

[1] Ex-territorial concessions held by foreign governments in the Ottoman empire, more especially in and about Constantinople.

have been favourably received in London and in Paris; the British Ambassador at Constantinople has already received instructions to support the steps taken by Tcharikoff.

Yet, it is possible that these negotiations will have to be delayed or put off for local reasons. *It is however desirable to make use of the present political situation, in order to induce the French and British Governments to express their views on the question of the Straits, in so far as Russia is concerned, in a concrete form and in writing, independently of any agreements, which we shall eventually conclude with Turkey.*

Furthermore—concerning England! We believe to be able to infer from your reports, that Grey wishes to make his consent dependent on a "previous" understanding with Turkey.[1] Such a condition does not appear very intelligible to us, for without offering England a "new" guarantee in an agreement, perhaps undesirable to England, it furnishes Turkey the possibility to raise objections eventually. *Indeed, we do not wish to solve the question of the Straits unconditionally "at once," we want merely to fix the "conditions" under which a solution becomes possible.*[2]

We hope therefore that England will be able, within the scope of these limitations, to define clearly her point of view, in writing; and if you think that this would mean a progress as compared to the memorandum of 1908, we request you to take the matter up with the British Ministers.

(383) *Letter from Benckendorff to Neratoff. Oct. 26-Nov. 8, 1911.*

I reported to you by telegram the communications which Tewfik Pasha under instructions from his Government, has lately made to Grey. They represent a proposal for a rapprochement between Turkey, England, Russia and France, though on condition that these three powers give Turkey their support in her peace negotiations with Italy. Grey's answer is in the main favourable to a rapprochement (Grey tells me he has taken up this attitude in view of our negotiations at Constantinople), but it excludes the

[1] The documents show that Grey had no such intention.
[2] Before Turkey was to be subjected to pressure.

promise of a direct support of the Turkish point of view against Italy.

I see no reason for doubting that Turkey, disappointed perhaps in her expectations of Germany and Austria, is seriously thinking of a rapprochement with the Entente powers. But she at once states her price. It must be taken for granted that the step undertaken by the Sublime Porte in London has been called forth by Tcharikoff's communications in Constantinople.

Meanwhile the Italian Ambassador has informed Grey of the Italian decree of annexation..... The condition made by Turkey, already unacceptable before Italy's decree, has now become still more unacceptable. This condition, it is true, is addressed to England, but seems to be directed principally at Russia, and our negotiations at Constantinople are therefore likely to be deferred for the present. The instructions you have forwarded to me in your letter No. 692 are for that reason all the more opportune.

The interruption of our negotiations in Constantinople gives me now the possibility to bring up the question of the Straits in another form, according to your instructions, i. e., independently of our negotiations at Constantinople. I will endeavour to obtain a result which means an advance, as compared to the memorandum of 1908—*though it is always difficult to induce the British Government to assume engagements on principle for future eventualities.*

In this connection, I will revert to a thought expressed in your letter 692. I do not recall that Grey made it a condition that the Sublime Porte should have previously agreed. As you properly remark, such an agreement will, of course, become necessary. But so far as I am aware, Grey and I have not talked about this. This misunderstanding perhaps has its origin in the fact, that I have not yet spoken to Grey about the abstract question of the Straits. I described the negotiations between Tcharikoff and Said Pasha in general outlines to the Minister, and, at the same time, mentioned the question of a free passage of the ships as one of the conditions, upon which we would come to an agreement with the Porte—contingent on a condition which I particularly accentuated and which led to my question to Sir Edward: Whether the British Government would be prepared to support this condition in Constantinople. My question as I put it to Grey, referred to an action

at Constantinople, having of course previously received England's consent on principle—I did not speak of a new engagement that England was to assume on principle towards us. In this new sense I will now revert to the matter in my conversations with Grey.

(384) *The Same to the Same. Oct. 26-Nov. 8, 1911.*

Since your letter 692 was written, events have confirmed your prediction as to the negotiations at Constantinople. I will not conceal from you the fact, that this signifies difficulties in the way of a rapid solution of the Straits question. I shall make an attempt, but am not certain that I shall succeed. But even then, this would not in any way signify that sentiment in England is growing cooler. During the last two years there has been a distinct progress here. So long as our relations remain what they now are, public opinion will not be excited by problems which actually already belong to the historic past. You will find the proof of this in Grey's answer. In 1908 Grey said:

"This shall and must be done some day, at present it is too soon." Today he no longer says: "It is too soon still." He says: I am ready to act. But one can act only when circumstances are propitious. He hopes this will be the case. Now, however this question has been postponed. It will be difficult to make him alter his point of view—he will recognize neither the usefulness nor the practical necessity. It is a question of certain traditional methods which find expression in everything.[1]

There exists nevertheless a way of mooting the question, and I will attempt it; but we must foresee objections against our present formula.[2] I believe these objections will assume the following form, not so much on England's part, as on that of Europe in general.

Our aim is the free passage through the Straits in both directions. As to this I see no particular obstacle. But to convert the Black Sea

[1] Great Britain's "traditional method" consisted of keeping the Straits under international control so that Russia could not use them at will for the purpose of controlling the Eastern Mediterranean.

[2] Benckendorff knew British policy too well to have meant this statement. The entire letter is an attempt at placating the impetuous Neratoff.

into a great port of refuge for the Russian fleet in the event of war—that is another question; in which connection, we are sure to encounter difficulties.

Like yourself I, too, perceive frequent signs that the British Government wishes to reinforce, even to extend, the scope of our Entente. One feels, that in all European questions of the day, particularly in those of the Near East, our views are in full accord with one another. But how are we to extend the community of our action still further? Or rather, in what form are we to clothe it? I am not yet quite clear about this.

I hear the idea of a defensive Alliance sometimes mentioned. This is too important a question to be broached by me. At present I have put it aside. I believe that Buchanan is considering it. *There remains therefore a more general agreement, which might concern Constantinople, the Balkans, perhaps also Asia Minor. It would be a question of inducing England to accept our views, which I consider possible; we on our part would concede Egypt, etc., to her. But a new agreement of this kind must necessarily also include the Far East.* This difficulty is, in my opinion, much greater, though not necessarily insurmountable. England is satiated with colonies,[1] she desires no further new acquisitions; therefore she does not wish any partition of territory, and has, consequently, set up the principle of territorial integrity. This concerns China, Persia, as well as points where we are not in touch; furthermore, England does not wish to proceed in any way against America. I will not say more in a letter improvised at the eleventh hour.

The convention between England and Russia has in truth produced unexpected results. As our agreement was based on Persia, it was long believed that in case things did not go well in Persia, the Entente would be broken up. In reality our understanding grows firmer and firmer—in spite of the difficulties we encounter in Persia. *But I believe one ought not to push too far the deductions from this observation,* however correct it may be in itself. A serious quarrel in Persia would be disastrous to the Entente. Yet the only danger, which might cause the disruption of the latter, is

[1] Matter of opinion; not borne out by more recent events giving Great Britain additional territories half the extent of the United States.

embodied in a situation which would leave no other solution than the partition of Persia.[1] We must keep this in view, as often as there is any question of occupying Persian territory. Military occupations of this kind lead directly to this end; everything else is of secondary importance. The Stokes incident should be a lesson to us.

(385) *Neratoff to Benckendorff. Telegram, Nov.* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 1862.

For your personal information:

Our Ambassador in Berlin telegraphed on November 10-23: *The Berlin Cabinet in no way opposes our agreement with Turkey concerning the opening of the Straits. As to Kiderlen's initiative to transmit our point of view to Vienna, the Secretary of State has the impression that Vienna would like to have details about our prospective agreement with Turkey.* It even appears as though Vienna believed that our agreement with the Sublime Porte is already signed; I denied this.

(386) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to M. Sazonoff. Letter, Jan.* 2-15, 1912.

May I, with the expression of the best New Year wishes, also give expression to the hope that your activity will remain assured to Russia for very many years to come? Personally, I shall endeavour to prevent your activity from being hampered by inner and outer events in Turkey—an activity which bears on the whole, not yet consolidated, Russian front from the Yellow Sea to the Prussian boundaries.

I trust we shall not need to exceed diplomatic activity here also in the coming year. We cannot however be quite assured of this, for the following three reasons:

1. The long war between Italy and Turkey; 2. the growing

[1] Persia was already divided by Russia and Great Britain into three zones: The Russian and British "zones of influence" and a small neutral zone. On that very date Russia was provocating Persia with a view of creating a situation that would result in the final partition of the country.

gravity of the situation in Persia; 3. the suspicious warlike feeling in Montenegro.[1]

1.) The dissolution of the Turkish Parliament has now been definitely decided and the elections will take place very shortly. The Sublime Porte will not deal with peace prior to this. I am forwarding you some statistics on Turco-Italian relations. *I do not believe it would be advantageous to us, however, were peace to be concluded before we have settled the Persian question.*

2.) I received your telegraphic enquiry on Turkey's military measures on the Persian frontier yesterday and applied to our Military Agent here for particulars. As soon as I have received the report of our Minister of War, you promised me, I shall reply by telegram. But I can already see that the Russian military program in the "contentious zone"[2] is steadily increasing. As recently as last spring, our General Staff deemed a military occupation of Khoi and Maku to be sufficient for the safeguarding of our strategic interests. Since then other desiderata have been added and already partly realised:

1. The controlling of the Khoi-Urmiah road; 2. the occupation of several points on this line of communication and perhaps westward of it, too, and 3. the despatching of a part of our Khoi detachment to Urmiah. The continuous extensions of our programme is apparently not due to any systematic plan, but is the result of local deliberations and, above all, of the wishes of the Caucasian Military Command.

In my opinion this should be the guiding principle in solving the problem. We must definitely determine what we need in the "contentious zone" and solve the question not from the standpoint of local but of general political requirements. We must take and hold what we need, even though it should lead to war with Turkey. Should we permit local deliberations to draw us further and further into the contentious zone, this would still end in a war with Turkey without this being justified by general political considerations.

The existing ambiguous conditions automatically lead to a con-

[1] A puny and wholly negligible state.

[2] This zone was supposed to be beyond Russian and British influences. While the term *contentious zone* is used by the writer of the document, he probably meant a zone in dispute or as it would be stated in French: *Zone contestée.*

tinuous strengthening of the Russian and Turkish forces in this zone as well as on both frontiers, and this again might end in an undesired collision. The present Turkish Government desires no war with us and in fact fears it. But it is under the influence of our inner and outer foes who point to our systematic advances. Once we ourselves are fully aware of what we need, then the tension in our relations with Turkey will diminish.

3.) I informed you by telegraph of the strange behaviour of the Montenegrin representative here. There is something on foot that I cannot explain from here.[1] Pallavicini[2] is absolutely correct in his manner, but knows the Turco-Montenegrin negotiations, at any rate the Boundary Protocol. The loan at Vienna points to Austrian support for Montenegro. Our troubles in China and Persia may give rise to the idea at Vienna that the proper time has now come to re-open activity in the Balkans. Be this as it may, the warlike tendencies in Montenegro must be regarded as a direct danger.

For reasons of home politics, the Sublime Porte is attempting to effect a reconciliation with the Albanians, which would be to Montenegro's disadvantage. Should the latter really seek an understanding with Turkey and not a pretence for a rupture, then why does not Cettinje turn towards Russia for support in the question of the Boundary Protocol of 1908, as was the case on the occasion of the discussions concerning the Lake of Scutari, the Antivari-Scutari Railway and the Malissores last summer?

(387) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Jan. 27-Feb. 9, 1912. No. 17.*

Poincaré[3] has just informed me in writing that the French Ambassador at Constantinople has been requested to confer, together with Tcharikoff, with the Turkish Government, regarding a modification of the Treaty of 1900. Poincaré added that the French Government was pleased to be able to assist us in this

[1] Montenegro was getting ready for war with Turkey.
[2] Austro-Hungarian ambassador at Constantinople.
[3] Minister of foreign affairs of France.

matter and he begs you to keep him fully informed of the trend of our discussions with Turkey.

(388) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Jan.* 31-*Feb.* 13, 1912. *No.* 42.

At to-day's diplomatic reception the Minister of Foreign Affairs made the following communication to me, which he requested me to treat as strictly private and confidential. Although the discussion of several questions, among others the railways of Asia Minor, has been postponed at our desire, he asked me whether we would not communicate to the Turkish Government—in view of the fact that the French preparatory work on the contemplated sectors will soon be ended—the points at which we desire to connect the Russian and Turkish railways, as well as our view on the commercial questions connected therewith. The Minister pointed out that it would be desirable for Turkey to receive our sanction to the increase up to 15 per cent of the Turkish Customs duties and the Temetu taxes.[1] Such a declaration on our part would make it easier for Turkey to arrive at an understanding with us previous to the final decision with regard to the French projects. I replied that I was instructed to accept private and confidential statements, but that before I could return a reply I would have to refer to my Government.....

I regard it as favourable that the Minister has taken the initiative in this matter and that he acknowledges the urgency of an understanding with us *before the French projects are accepted.* I think it proper to inform the Minister of our maximum demands concerning the Asia Minor railways; we must not, however, tell him plainly that we shall oppose the construction of railways in a certain zone, but we must make such constructions dependent on conditions which will fully protect our interests. . . . Our consent to the increase of the Customs duties and the Temetu might cause the Sublime Porte to meet us halfway in railway matters. The Turks will certainly try to bargain with us, but under the prevailing circumstances, and supported by the Paris Cabinet, we shall undoubtedly be the stronger of the two.

[1] Turkey's foreign debts were under a foreign administration which controlled certain revenues.

(389) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Feb. 3-16, 1912. No. 230.*

Before replying to the Minister of Foreign Affairs' statements submit the following to the Sublime Porte:

1.) The situation created by the Treaty of 1900 can alone serve as the basis of our negotiations; hence the linking up of the railway nets in Asia Minor can be discussed only after the fundamental principles concerning survey and construction of the lines have been determined. These principles are embodied in the third clause of the Treaty of 1900: "In the construction of the lines both parties will have to take into consideration the mutual commercial interests of both States."

2.) As for the four per cent Customs all countries are interested in this, and we thus cannot give a onesided promise to Turkey, all the more as we are unaware of the purpose to which the surplus is to be devoted. *This would represent so great a concession on our part that we should have to insist on a special compensation in our favour.*

(390) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb. 6-19, 1912. No. 53.*

Your telegram No. 230 received.

I informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs to-day that I was instructed to tell him that we desired to see the principle of consideration of the mutual commercial interests of both countries established before we were able to express our readiness to open negotiations with the Sublime Porte on the railways of Asia Minor. It is therefore a case now of determining the lines and the manner of their construction. After some hesitation, the Minister accepted this standpoint. He will induce the Minister of Public Works to request detailed information from the French contractors which he will then bring to our knowledge.

We agreed with Assim Bey to look upon our present exchange of views as private and to begin official negotiations at a later date. . . . . It appears to me necessary to influence the French contractors to adapt their reply to our desires, *as it would be advantageous were the French Syndicate itself to make an unfavourable re-*

port upon those lines which are disadvantageous to us. The Trapezund-Erzerum line presents especially severe technical difficulties. The director of the Ottoman Bank,[1] *Revoil, helps us in every respect.* Lamornet informed me that the original estimate of the Syndicate expenses will be raised by 22 per cent, as labour has become much more expensive. The appointment of Djavid Bey, who is well-disposed towards us and desires to win French favour, is most fortunate for us. It is desirable that the French Ambassador should return here as soon as possible.

(391) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 7-20, 1912. *No.* 54.

I refer to my telegram No. 53.

I took it upon myself to explain to the Minister how strongly we must insist on safeguarding our economic predominance in Northern Persia, not against Turkish but against foreign competition; for which latter the construction of a railway through Turkish territory in the direction of the Caucasian frontier and Persia means great convenience.

In answer to the Minister's question whether we agreed to the French *tracé,*[2] I replied that my Government would answer this question at the proper time. I am convinced that the Turks have no illusions as to the nature of our demands, and that the main object of the new negotiations will consist in finding a formula enabling the Turks to satisfy us and save their own honour at the same time.....

(392) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 8-21, 1912. *No.* 58.

In his conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the French Chargé d'Affaires gained the impression that the Turkish Government is ready to accept the mode of negotiation proposed by us. Furthermore, Assim Bey would appear to have understood that we must secure our predominance in Northern Persia; he therefore seems inclined to concede that the French lines in question shall only be built after our railway net in Northern Persia has

[1] A Turkish institution.
[2] Survey.

been completed. It seems to me that instead of a protracted postponement of the discussions of the direction and method of construction of the railways in the forbidden zone, the Turks would prefer to withdraw at once the construction of various lines not agreeable to us, such as, for instance, the Erzerum-Bajasid Line, and to postpone the laying of other lines, such as Trapezund-Erzerum or even Erzerum-Ersingian.

The French believe that the Turks will have to insist on the rapid construction of the line to Erzerum and from Diarbekir to Bitlis. In the event of an enquiry from Djavid Bey, the French will reply that the results of the preparatory work will soon be submitted to the Sublime Porte, that is, on the receipt of the desired information from Paris. For technical reasons the railway will only be able to reach Erzerum ten years after work on the Samsun-Siwas line has commenced.

(393) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 46.

Count Vitali has informed me that in consequence of the urgent enquiry of the Sublime Porte the Syndicate sees itself compelled to communicate its plans on Monday. *Important details and figures will be purposely left out in order to protract the negotiations so far as possible.*

(394) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb.* 21-*March* 5, 1912. *No.* 88.

I am convinced that the desire of the present Turkish Cabinet to arrive at an understanding with us is so great that it has not waited for the communication of the results of the French surveys and that the desiderata now submitted to us really represent the maximum of the Turkish demands. This mode of action affords us possibility of insisting on our principle of considering the mutual commercial interests.

Our acquiescence in the linking up of the lines between Kars and Erzerum, which is feared by the Turks, provides us with a new means of exerting pressure on them now, and of securing for the future our commercial supremacy in the Eastern part of

Anatolia. The negotiations with French contractors confirm Turkey's intention to grant them the concessions and no one else. Turkey is forced to this by her financial condition and by the necessity of seeking support from the Powers of the Triple Entente.

The report of the French contractors will be a very pessimistic one[1] (thanks to the aid of Revoil, who in a strictly confidential manner is influencing the decision of the Syndicate)—chiefly from a financial point of view. . . . These reports are to be submitted within a fortnight. I propose that we await their effect before giving an answer to the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs' communication of yesterday.

(395) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 17-30, 1912. *No.* 189.

Assim Bey gave me yesterday explanations of his negotiations with my predecessor.[2] The latter upheld the standpoint of mutual commercial interests and proved that Russia, who had conquered the North Persian markets with so much difficulty,[3] could not permit her foreign competitors to use the Persian railroads for the purpose of crowding her out of Persia.[4] On these grounds, Assim Bey informed Tcharikoff which lines Turkey intends to build in the course of a period of eight years and he waited for our reply.

I replied to the Minister that I share the views of my predecessor completely. The conversations between him and the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs had had, as was arranged, a personal and preparatory character; the Sublime Porte had now, however, without notifying us, made official mention of these negotiations in the Speech from the Throne. I asked the Minister which negotiations were really meant by this speech. Assim Bey replied in great confusion that he had believed it to be a question of preparatory negotiations. I again called his attention to the thoroughly confidential nature of these conversations and added that I was ready to resume the exchange of views, but that the Turkish Government should remember that the construction of the railways depended on previously determined conditions; which are still in

[1] Diplomacy with a vengeance.
[2] de Giers having succeeded Tcharikoff.
[3] Admission why Persia was occupied, politically and militarily.
[4] Directed mainly at Germany, as the documents show.

force. In acordance with Turkish wishes we were ready to modify these conditions, but we desired to know what guarantees we should receive as compensation for our compliance. We expected proposals in writing. Assim Bey replied that he must first discuss this question with the Grand Vizier and the Minister of Communications.[1] As to the forbidden zone, I did not touch upon this question at all.....

[1] The project was then abandoned.

VI

RUSSIA, THE BALKAN LEAGUE AND THE POWERS

(March—September 1912)

(396) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, March 17-30, 1912. No. 580.*

Identical telegram sent to Paris. Personal.

A treaty has been concluded with our cognizance between Serbia and Bulgaria for the purpose of mutual defence and the protection of common interests in the event of a change of the status quo in the Balkans or one of the contracting parties being attacked by a third Power. Geshoff and Spalaikowitch, the Serbian Minister at Sofia, have informed Ironside, the British Minister in Bulgaria, that the treaty has been concluded. I request you to communicate the above, on the first favourable occasion, verbally to Poincaré for his personal information, *and to direct very earnestly his attention to the necessity of keeping the conclusion of this treaty strictly secret. You may add that as a secret clause obliges both parties to primarily obtain Russia's views before taking any active steps, we believe to have a means at our command to influence both Governments while we have at the same time taken a protective measure in order to oppose any expansion of the influence of any Great Power in the Balkans.*

(397) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, March 19-April 1, 1912. No. 91.*

Received your telegram No. 580.

Ironside having been informed, I deem it necessary to mention the matter confidentially to Grey. Provided I receive no different instructions I shall do so within the course of the next days.

(398) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, March 22-April* 4, 1912. *No.* 33.

The Bulgarian Government is in urgent need of a loan of from 160 to 180 million francs in order to conclude the conversion of the 82 millions of the 6% loan and in order to begin the construction of the Jamboli-Kisil-Agatch and Caspian-Silistria railway line. The loan is to be taken up in France, and the French Minister at Sofia has of late repeatedly directed Geshoff's attention to the fact that the first condition which the French Cabinet would make, before consenting to this financial operation being carried through, *would be a categoric statement on the part of the Bulgarian Government that from now on Bulgaria would join the policy pursued by the three Entente Powers. As a result, Geshoff, acting with the King's consent, has addressed himself to me to request you to assist Bulgaria in this matter and to inform the Paris Cabinet of the political course Bulgaria has chosen to follow. Geshoff added that the Bulgarian Government would give formal guarantees that the loan would not be employed for armaments but solely for carrying through the conversion of the old loan and for railway construction.* Geshoff intends to inform the French Minister that the Bulgarian Government wishes to apply for such a loan; the Bulgarian Minister at Paris has already received corresponding instructions.

(399) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 3-16, 1912. *No.* 34.

The French Ambassador has informed Geshoff that his Government is prepared in principle to consent to the Bulgarian loan being taken up at Paris. Negotiations as to the amount and all details will begin at once.

(400) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Sazonoff. Report, June* 7-20, 1912. *No.* 16.

Geshoff, having returned to Sofia, informed me that the treaty between Bulgaria and Greece has been signed. The substance of this treaty has been indicated in my telegram of May 1. The Bulgarian Government has not altered the expressions to the inexpediency and perilous nature of which I had been instructed by you to draw Geshoff's attention. As you are aware, Geshoff's replies to our ob-

jections are not devoid of a certain foundation. However, I know that the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs could not have effected any changes in the text, even if he had desired to do so, because this would have delayed the signing of the treaty, while on the other hand, *King Ferdinand most emphatically insisted on the treaty being signed as quickly as possible, his views being shared by some members of the Cabinet and by all those in high military command.* [1]

Nevertheless, I do not believe that this treaty will cause any serious complications in the Balkans. The old mistrust existing between Bulgarians and Greeks cannot be removed by a single diplomatic document, and each side is primarily taking care not to be dragged into any dangerous adventure without having the certainty of an ample reward in the event of success. On the other hand, the Greco-Bulgarian treaty constitutes a favourable factor which will not only prevent the horrible bloodshed between the two orthodox nationalities in Macedonia, but may also serve to create a certain understanding and even, to some extent, a uniformity of action. This is, in any case, a great step forward.

(401) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 28-May* 11, 1912. *No.* 54.

The rumours of preparations for an Albanian insurrection, which I mentioned in my earlier reports, are confirmed. According to information received here, *the movement is being encouraged in Montenegro, and arms and money in plenty are being distributed from there.* The Serbian Government has refused the request of the Arnaut [2] leaders for assistance, and is much alarmed, because the insurrection is this time being organised in the vilayet of Kossovo which is in close proximity to the Serbian sphere of influence.

(402) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, July 24-Aug.* 6, 1912. *No.* 536.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs has informed me that the attacks of the Montenegrins [3] have caused great excitement here

[1] War by the Balkan League, consisting of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece, upon Turkey ensued shortly afterwards.
[2] Albanian.
[3] Upon the Turks.

and that he has much difficulty in restraining his colleagues in the Ministry from stringent counter-measures. *I replied to the Minister that our information from Montenegro runs counter to his assertion that it was the Montenegrins and not the Turks who crossed the frontier, and that, therefore, he should investigate the reports of the Turkish frontier guards very carefully.* I added that in the present state of affairs in the interior of Turkey, the Sublime Porte should avoid any incidents at the Montenegrin frontier. It was in the interests of Turkey to settle also the last incident through diplomatic channels. *For this purpose negotiations with Montenegro should immediately be inaugurated in order to forestall further complications. The Minister acquainted me with the contents of a telegram sent to the Turkish representative at Cettinje in which the Sublime Porte declares to be convinced that King Nicolas' Government was not responsible for the incident, and a proposal is made that a joint investigation be instituted in order to prevent further complications.*

(403) *The Russian Minister at Cettinje to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 6-19, 1912. *No.* 125.

The incident at Berana threatens to lead to complications. *Our military agent here telegraphs to the General Staff today that Montenegro is assisting the rebels with arms, cartridges and soldiers. I have received the same information from the Austrian Minister Giesl who fears that Montenegro will take still further active measures.*[1] I share this fear, because Montenegro is undoubtedly making military preparations these last days, and *the Montenegrin heir to the throne plainly alluded the other day to the warlike spirit of the Montenegrin Government. In the course of a personal and confidential discussion, Giesl expressed his opinion to the effect that only an immediate and simultaneous pressure by Russia and Austria on King Nicolas, who is completely under the influence of some of his ministers,*[2] *can restrain him from taking a rash step.* Giesl told me he had today asked for instructions to that effect. I hasten to inform you of this.

[1] What the Austrian diplomatist knew was known in Constantinople, of course.
[2] King Nicolas being at any time under the influence of his ministers is possible, of course, but not very probable.

(404) *The Acting Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Neratoff, to the Russian Ambassador in London. Telegram, Sept.* 25-*Oct.* 8, 1912. *No.* 2102.

I am telegraphing to Sofia, Belgrade and Athens:

According to private information, the Montenegrin representative has left Constantinople after handing to the Sublime Porte a declaration of war. If this step has not been taken in agreement with, and the consent of, the other Balkan States, we assume that the latter are not bound to follow this example, the less so as the breaking off of diplomatic relations need not be taken as an inevitable outbreak of war between Turkey and Montenegro.[1] Even warlike collisions between both States can be brought to a standstill by the Powers bringing their influence to bear on both sides, without any serious danger arising thereby to the vital interests of Montenegro and Turkey. *If it turns out to be true that Montenegro has acted independently, then draw the attention of the Government to which you are accredited to the great responsibility which would fall upon it if it should act in contradiction to the representations of the Powers, which, as you know, declare their readiness to take the question of reforms in Turkey into their own hands.* We are instructing our ambassador at Constantinople at the same time, to tranquilize Turkey.

(405) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Sofia. Confidential Letter, May* 17-30, 1912.

The arrival at Yalta of a Bulgarian special mission, with Daneff at its head, has enabled me to discuss with him the main international questions concerning Bulgaria.

Daneff began the conversation with rather uncompromising statements. *He pointed out how difficult the great financial burden made it for Bulgaria to be in constant readiness for war without being able to exploit in a diplomatic way the present difficulties of Turkey.*[2] An immediate settlement of the Macedonian question becomes therefore all the more imperative for Bulgaria. In consequence of the Turkish administration of this territory, the Bulgarian element

[1] Actual starting of the Balkan War. The action was taken after the forming of the Balkan League for that very purpose. What Sazonoff really meant by his identical telegram to Sofia, Belgrade and Athens was to indicate his displeasure at the independence shown by the Balkan Allies in not consulting him.

[2] The war with Italy.

is losing ground. *This situation leads many circles in Bulgaria to believe that those parts of Turkish territory which are gravitating towards Bulgaria should be acquired by force of arms.* I found no difficulty in proving to Daneff how little an active step on the part of Bulgaria, and the complications arising therefrom in the Balkans, would please Russian public opinion and our Government; and how improbable it was that events would take a turn favourable to Bulgaria in case of a general collision. At subsequent conversations I found Daneff more reasonable on that question.

As regards the direct Russo-Bulgarian relations, especially the conclusion of a Military Convention between Russia and Bulgaria, *Daneff tried to convince me of the desirability of the vilayet of Adrianople being included in the sphere of interest allotted to Bulgaria. I replied that Adrianople did not belong to the territory of Bulgaria as defined in the Treaty of San Stefano,* and that, moreover, if the Bulgarian national aspirations were satisfied, Adrianople would lose its present significance as a Turkish outpost, because, in that case, Turkey herself would sink to the level of a second-rate Power.

Daneff then requested we should give our consent to the abolition of the Capitulations[1] as soon as possible, it being desirable that Austria should not forestall us in this matter. I refrained from giving a definitive answer and merely intimated that a happy solution of this question depended, to a certain extent, on Bulgaria herself.

Daneff furthermore asked that we should favour the conclusion of a Customs Union with Serbia; also that we should consent to a close union between the officers of the Russian and Bulgarian armies. I held out to him the prospect of these two wishes being granted. *Daneff complained of the alleged insincerity of French Government and financial circles in the matter of a Bulgarian loan in Paris. I promised to let the Bulgarian efforts in that direction be supported by our Ambassador at Paris and, as a matter of fact, Iswolsky's declarations have since given favourable results for Bulgaria.*

We then discussed Bulgaria's relations to the other Balkan States. With regard to Roumania, Daneff emphasized with considerable annoyance that all attempts to render the mutual relations

[1] Ex-territorial privileges of the Powers in Turkey, especially in and near Constantinople.

more friendly had failed, and that Bulgaria was beginning to doubt whether it ever would be possible to obtain such a result. Nevertheless, negotiations are being conducted between the two kingdoms concerning special questions of shipping on the Danube, in order to attempt to forestall continual interference on the part of Austria. By the way, Daneff mentioned that Austria was prepared to admit a Bulgarian representative on the Danube Commission, but refused her consent to the admission of a Serbian representative.

Bulgaria has been negotiating for some time past with Greece about the conclusion of a defensive alliance which, however, does not cover the eventuality of a conflict between Greece and Turkey on account of Crete. Daneff admitted that it was extraordinarily difficult to agree on a division of the respective spheres of interest in Macedonia; the question of the churches also presented some difficulties. He added that Bulgaria is keeping these negotiations secret, and that Greece for her part has no knowledge of the existence of a Serbo-Bulgarian alliance.[1] *Naturally I approved of this discretion under the existing circumstances.*

With regard to Montenegro, we discussed the possibility of letting this country join the Serbo-Bulgarian alliance. I emphasized that I should consider such an action a mistake, because there is open enmity between Montenegro and Serbia, and any political treaty would be insincere,[2] *quite apart from the fact that such an alliance would immediately become known to Austria.*

Of great interest to me was Daneff's categorical assertion that in 1908 *Austria had attempted to draw Bulgaria over to her side by promising to concede Macedonia to the latter and by holding out hopes of a partition of Serbia.*[3] *The Bulgarians, he asserted, had rejected these overtures, and in this respect the people were absolutely of one mind with the King. Anyway, King Ferdinand had, of late, changed in his feelings towards Serbia and King Peter.*

[1] Diplomacy has never and nowhere been an honest business, it seems.

[2] It is hard to define insincerity in the diplomatic sense.

[3] The Russian minister did not place much faith in the words of "Cospodin" Daneff, whom he knew as a diplomatic cutthroat second not even to Iswolsky himself. While Count Aehrenthal was not in any sense a careful man, it must be doubted that he made any such proposal—least of all to M. Daneff himself, who of all Balkan Pan-Slavs was probably the most ardent, even as late as 1916.

(406) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, May 24-June 6, 1912.*

The Bulgarian Minister of Finance, Todoroff, spent some days here in order to confer with the French Government and the French banks about the impending loan. In accordance with the instructions received, I actively supported him, and Todoroff left Paris, highly pleased with the results attained. . . .

Todoroff is convinced—and this conviction is shared by the other members of the Bulgarian Government—*that a speedy termination of the Italo-Turkish war is by no means to the interests of Bulgaria. The present struggle must, in the end, extremely weaken both States, and these two States belong to that group of Powers which is opposed, on principle, to the Slavs and the Slav Balkan States. The leaders of all political parties in Bulgaria hold that such an opportunity will not recur for a long time, and that, therefore, Bulgaria would make an unpardonable mistake if she did not try to exploit it for the attainment of her historic aspirations.* From this standpoint, the Bulgarian Government rejects the idea of a conference to end the Italo-Turkish conflict in its present stage. A conference will become necessary, but not until events will have developed further *and until questions will have arisen the settlement of which depends on Europe. This attitude of Bulgaria towards the war must not, Todoroff says, cause any apprehensions in Russia. Geshoff's Government is strong enough to continue in its attitude of waiting until the opportune moment will arise. The Bulgarian Government considers it to be its immediate task to settle upon a plan of joint action with the other Balkan States. The alliance with Serbia is the first favourable step in this direction. Now every effort must be made to induce Roumania not to oppose Bulgaria's advance to the south, and Todoroff believes this to be possible at the price of a modification of the frontier near Silistria.*[1]

Negotiations with Greece are now at last in progress, which will, in all probability, lead to a community of interests being established between Bulgaria and Greece. The Bulgarian Government is firmly resolved not to attempt to draw the Russian Government into any active steps against its will, but, on the other hand, *Russia must leave Bulgaria a free hand to make this or that decision, according to*

[1] A part of the Bulgarian Dobrudja was to be ceded to Rumania for non-interference.

the course of events, the possibility of a joint action with Italy not being excluded, the latter having, it is alleged, already thrown out hints in that direction.

Bulgaria admits Constantinople and the Straits to be the special sphere of Russian interests, and reckons with the possibility of our holding aloof until these interests are involved. This would even be to the advantage of Bulgaria in so far as Russia's attitude of reserve would prevent Austria from interfering, and the general liquidation will then be conducted by Europe, probably at a congress or a conference, in which case Russia would be supported, not only by France and England but also by Italy.[1] . . . . .

On my enquiring what King Ferdinand thought of this plan, *Todoroff replied that of late the King understood the real historic mission of Bulgaria and was totally in agreement with his people and his Government. His consent to the Bulgaro-Serbian alliance was a proof of this. On the other hand, we must keep in view the fact that at the critical moment he will grasp any hand that offers him help.*[2]

(407) *The Same to the Same. Letter, June 7-20, 1912.*

Poincaré has spoken to me about the visits of the King of Bulgaria to Vienna and Berlin and expressed his concern as to the object and the character of these visits. The honours accorded the King have surprised him, and he cannot help but suspect that they point to some secret obligations undertaken by King Ferdinand towards Austria and Germany.

"You know," he said, "that the French Government has been willing to facilitate the Bulgarian loan at Paris only because the Russian Government has declared that Bulgaria, after the conclusion of a secret alliance with Serbia, was firmly resolved to side with the three Entente Powers. **In consideration of the decisive influence exerted by King Ferdinand on Bulgarian policy, especially its foreign policy, do you not think that, before we put a great deal of money at Bulgaria's disposal, we should make sure of the King's real intentions and should, in one form or another, demand from him a guarantee**

[1] An intrigue of a classical character.

[2] Ferdinand had that habit, and his ministers were none too loyal, it seems. Between Daneff and Todoroff and their group, the Coburger had a hard time.

that he on his part approves of the resolution of the Bulgarian Government mentioned above?"

Poincaré then drew my attention to the fact that the rumour of the signing of a secret Bulgaro-Serbian agreement had already found its way into the press. He knows nothing of the source of these rumours. The "Temps" states it has received this information from its St. Petersburg correspondent. Other papers assert that a French correspondent had seen the text of the agreement at St. Petersburg. *The former French Minister at Sofia, Paléologue, thinks this rumour has emanated from the palace and is intended to serve some intricate plans of King Ferdinand.*

(408) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, June 25-July 8, 1912. No. 1266.*

No. 1. We are in receipt of information from Sofia regarding a warlike spirit which is noticeable in several Bulgarian circles. We are giving to our Minister at Sofia the instructions with which we acquaint you in No. 2.

(409) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Sofia. Telegram, June 25-July 8, 1912.*

No. 2. Everything reported by you will be considered by us. Please continue closely to watch the development of the warlike spirit at Sofia. It appears desirable, however, to give the Bulgarians to understand that according to strictly secret information in our possession, immediate peace negotiations between Italy and Turkey are not precluded. This circumstance would deprive any Bulgarian action of its practical basis and would change the present circumstances very much to Bulgaria's disadvantage:[1] Bulgaria would find herself confronting Turkey in complete isolation.

(410) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept. 7-20, 1912. No. 115.*

On my enquiring about the existence of a Military Convention between Bulgaria and Montenegro, Geshoff answered evasively that "the Bulgarian Government had received certain proposals from King Nico-

[1] Sazonoff always resented the exercise of initiative by the Balkan states, these being to him mere appanages of Russia.

las," but that it had not yet given a definite answer. I am convinced, however, that the Military Convention is prepared though not yet signed. The spreading insurrection of the Malissores is a proof of the Bulgarians having created for themselves the possibility of intervening at the shortest notice.

(411) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, July* 7-20, 1912. *No.* 494.

The British Chargé d'Affaires here has been informed by Grey that the Serbian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin had made warlike statements to the German Under-secretary of State, whereupon he had been advised to observe calmness and prudence. I told the British Chargé d'Affaires that I had no knowledge of warlike intentions on the part of Serbia.

(412) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, July* 8-21, 1912. *No.* 89.

I refer to the telegram of our Ambassador at Constantinople No. 494.

The Serbian representative at Berlin has apparently only given expression to his personal view for, as is evident from my reports, *Serbia is absolutely averse to warlike plans of any kind.* The best proof: The King has gone to Koseilyatsch for the cure; Pashitch has retained the transition Ministry, has gone to the provinces, and will then go to Marienbad; the Prime Minister Trifkovitsh is going to Germany for the cure on Wednesday.[1] *In spite of all this, however, I must admit that a general spirit of unrest has not been allayed here, but, on the contrary, has even increased as disquieting news comes in from all sides.* In England the opinion seems to prevail that a revolution and bloodshed in Turkey are inevitable. Information received from Bulgarian and other sources confirms these rumours. *Austria is quite openly holding offensive manoeuvres near Ostrova, in the direction of the Morava, in the region of the Matchva and the Drina.*[2] No doubt, the Serbians will be forced to take some precautionary measures so as not to be surprised by events and to

[1] A time-honored ruse calculated to lull the victim into a false sense of security.
[2] Along the Serbian border.

forestall, at least partly, serious political complications in the Balkans.[1]

(413) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, July* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 91.

The Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs is very much astonished at the statements of the Serbian representative at Berlin, since there was no reason for them. *He confirmed everything I telegraphed to you yesterday, and added that the Minister of War also had gone abroad for his health.* Very disquieting reports from Constantinople were received here today, according to which it is planned to dethrone the Sultan on the anniversary of the 10th of July.

(414) *The Russian Ambassador at Vienna to Sazonoff. Telegram, July* 16-29, 1912. *No.* 54.

The Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs positively denies the correctness of the statements of the Serbian Consul at Budapest. So far, Austria has not taken any military measures proper; it is well known, however, to what an extent nervousness prevails at Belgrade.

(415) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 7-20, 1912. *No.* 108.

The Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs looks upon Austria's proposal, as far as it refers to the decentralisation of Turkish rule, *as a continuation of the policy of Aehrenthal who endeavoured to create an autonomous Albania out of the vilayets of Kossovo, Monastir, Yanina and Scutari, all of which feel themselves drawn to the four neighbouring States.*[2] On that account the latter cannot give their assent to Berchtold's [3] proposal which is opposed to their Albanian interests and which is hardly likely to produce reassurance. The Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed himself in that sense to

[1] Quite a remarkable document—the expression of a man who was purposely misleading his superior. A close analysis of it is recommended.

[2] Not true. The Albanians had been trying for years to break away from Turkey and set themselves up as an autonomous state, having no intention to join either Bulgaria, Montenegro, Serbia or Greece.

[3] Austro-Hungarian minister of foreign affairs.

the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires. He hopes to come to an agreement with the Bulgarians in this question. Please send instructions.

For the present I confine myself to pointing out that Russia is still, as heretofore, the protector of the Slavs[1] *as a whole and is thoroughly acquainted with the interests and requirements of Serbia which she has so much at heart.* The press and public opinion express their complete distrust of the alleged unselfish intentions of Austria who by her present demeanour proves anew that she is interested in the continuance of the troubles in the Balkans.

(416) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept.* 14-27, 1912. *No.* 141.

The Turkish mobilisation is still causing excitement. Turkey's explanation that certain units had been called to the colours on account of the manoeuvres which had already been planned at an earlier date, naturally finds no credence, for nearly all troops of European Turkey are being concentrated; this is confirmed from various quarters. It was my task to persuade the Government here not to hasten counter-measures. *Pashitch has also adopted my standpoint and has telegraphed to the Bulgarian Government, which demanded an immediate Serbo-Bulgarian mobilisation, to put off the beginning and the execution of this measure as long as possible. Serbia and Bulgaria have apparently agreed that their general mobilisation shall begin on September* 16, *and last until September* 25, *or* 26, *Serbia using manoeuvres as a pretext.*[2] Thus we have 20 days before us in the course of which we may, perhaps, be able to force Turkey to desist from mobilisation, for once the two armies stand opposite each other a rifle shot will suffice to set the fire ablaze.

(417) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept.* 17-30, 1912. *No.* 731.

Urgent. The Serbian Minister here has informed me that he had been instructed by Pashitch to demand explanations from the

[1] Their master, if possible.
[2] A highly moral proceeding, which was coupled to an understanding with Montenegro to start the ball rolling. See documents dealing with this.

Sublime Porte regarding the calling-up of the reserve division of Uskub and Mitrovitsa; likewise to demand the release of the detained war-material or its return to Marseilles.[1] The Serbian representative has declared to the Sublime Porte that he would wait for an answer for two days, whereupon he would leave.[2] The stipulation of a limit of two days will only increase the general irritation, considering the present excited state of the Turks.

(418) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Sept.* 17-30, 1912. *No.* 734.

Concerning his negotiations with regard to the detained war material, the Serbian representative gives me the following information: *In reply to his protest and his declaration that Serbia's policy towards Turkey had remained friendly,*[3] *the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs said that, as soon as the declarations of the Serbian representative were repeated in writing, the war material would be allowed to pass through. On Saturday the Minister informed the Sublime Porte that he could not give such a declaration in writing,* whereupon the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs asked him once more to apply by telegram to Pashitch for authority to give such a declaration. So far, not a word has been said of returning the war material to Marseilles.

(419) *The Russian Ambassador at Vienna to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, July* 4-17, 1912.

I have had a long conversation with Berchtold in the course of which he took pains to express his friendliest feelings towards Russia. . . . . .

The rumours of a republican movement in the Balkans which our Minister at Sofia is said to report, have reached him too, but Berchtold hopes that these rumours are exaggerated. Nevertheless, he looks upon the situation in Turkey and Albania as very threatening. It will all depend upon how far the Turkish army

[1] It will be remembered that the Bulgarian loan was raised in France.
[2] An ultimatum.
[3] The arms were to be used by the Balkan League against Turkey, there being no longer any doubt in the minds of the Turks.

will remain loyal to the Sultan and not go over to Albania. The latest reports of the Austrian agent in Albania are alarming. *Berchtold thinks some influence should be brought to bear on the Governments of Bulgaria and Serbia, in order to deprive them of all desire to interfere; if the fire were to be set ablaze, however, the Powers would have to try to localize the fighting and to refrain from any interference.* I conclude from these words that Berchtold wanted to defend his Government against the reproach of an advance in the Balkans, as the Berlin Cabinet has probably informed him in confidence of our apprehensions. The Minister is leaving Vienna in a few days but will retain the management of the Ministry.

(420) *The Russian Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Neratoff, to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna. Telegram, Aug.* 5-18, 1912. *No.* 1566.

This telegram is being communicated to the Russian Representatives at Paris, London, Berlin, Rome and Constantinople.

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador has presented a memorandum to us in which the Vienna Cabinet proposes to the Powers to enter upon an exchange of views as to the situation in the Balkans. *The Austrian Government welcomes the intention of the Sublime Porte to concede certain privileges to the Albanians,* and thinks the other nationalities of European Turkey ought to be very satisfied with this first step towards administrative decentralisation, because at some time in the future they could demand the same privileges for themselves. *But Bulgaria, Greece and even Serbia, are inclined to see in the concessions granted to the Albanians a menace to the interests of the other nationalities and in Bulgaria the feeling seems to be such that grave difficulties might be created to the peaceful policy of Geshoff's Ministry.*

The Austro-Hungarian Government therefore proposes, on the one hand, to support the new direction of the Turkish internal policy, and, on the other, to make representations to the Balkan States in order to show them that Turkey's present policy is to the interests of the nationalities in Turkey which are related to them, and that, therefore, they must refrain from taking any steps that might threaten peace in the Balkans.

In reply, Minister Sazonoff told the Ambassador that he is agreed as to such advice being given at Constantinople so long as there is no question of a too far-reaching autonomy; but this advice must not assume the character of collective representations because such might not be agreeable to the Turkish Government. *As regards the steps to be taken with the Balkan States, however, these were, in our opinion, no longer of any practical value since we had already advised calmness and prudence;*[1] under certain conditions they might even have the opposite effect by weakening the position of the Government. . . . . .

(421) *Neratoff to the Russian Embassies at Paris and London. Telegram, Aug.* 5-18, 1912. *No.* 1564.

The Bulgarian and Serbian representatives, acting on instructions received from their respective Governments, have asked us to take the initiative in securing for the Christian population of European Turkey the same privileges now obtained by the Albanians as the result of their negotiations with Turkey. This request has been addressed to us on account of the difficult position of their Governments which has been caused by the excitement prevailing in those countries. This state of excitement would be aggravated if it should appear that the Albanians had achieved important results after having taken up arms, while the remaining nationalities, yielding to the will of the Powers, would be forced to go on living under the former unbearable conditions.

In view of Count Berchtold's proposals we on our part, think this step of Bulgaria and Greece at St. Petersburg cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed. Although Count Berchtold takes it for granted that the reforms in Albania will naturally be extended to the other nationalities too, yet there is ground for fearing that opinions and good advice will not suffice to bring about an amicable settlement. *We think it would be best to fulfil the wishes of the Bulgarian and Greek Governments to a certain degree. For this purpose, the privileges granted to the Albanians should be restricted as far as possible,*[2] and a promise should be exacted from the Turkish Govern-

[1] Of a sort promoting Pan-Slavism.
[2] The Albanians wanted national autonomy.

ment to grant the same privileges to the remaining nationalities too. The initiative with regard to the latter point might be left to the Turks after the Ambassadors at Constantinople will have arrived at an understanding with Turkey.

This, our view, appears to us not to be opposed to Berchtold's proposals.

(422) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 152.

In reply to the Austrian proposal, Poincaré has addressed a telegram to the French Ambassador at Vienna of the following purport: France would gladly advise Turkey to extend the privileges she is about to grant to the Albanians also to the other Christian nationalities. *At present France cannot take it upon herself to effect a change in the status quo. On this condition she is prepared to enter on an exchange of views. She will, of course, not adopt any decision without having previously come to an understanding with Russia and England.*

(423) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna to Sazonoff. Confidential Report, Aug.* 2-15, 1912.

I did not omit to ask Berchtold as soon as possible what his views were regarding events in the Balkans. I gained the impression that he, no less than we, wishes to localize the conflict. He recognizes the danger of this conflict not only in the last Montenegrin frontier incident, but in case of events of the nature of the massacres at Kotshan which might cause active intervention on the part of Bulgaria. The key to the political situation lies, as far as he can see, at Constantinople: if the Government succeeds in holding out, there is some hope of localizing the conflict, while it is impossible to foresee the effects of anarchy, or even of disturbances lasting any length of time.

In addition to the above I beg to submit the following considerations: Although there is undoubtedly a restive military party here, and although Austria has taken preparatory measures, details of which I am giving in my report No. 29, yet I am con-

vinced that there is no serious cause for alarm lest Austria be following up aggressive aims at the present juncture. *They are fully aware here of the consequences such a policy might lead to: it would be the signal for the European war.* And such a war is too dangerous for Austria that she, or any other country, should consciously provoke such a catastrophe.

For Austria war is perhaps still less desirable than for another Great Power, considering her financial as well as military unpreparedness. . . . .

In conclusion I beg to observe that the general tone of the local press hardly appears to admit the idea that the spirit of the population is of that high tension which alone makes preparation for a war of aggression possible.

(424) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug* 16-29, 1912.

Paléologue[1] tells me Georges Louis has telegraphed that a rumour was circulating at St. Petersburg according to which Berchtold wished to propose a conference and you had said the Entente should forestall him. It was your opinion that France should take the initiative. This idea evidently pleased him very much. While I was with Paléologue, Poincaré was conferring with the British Ambassador on this question.

(425) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 8-21, 1912.

Bollati[2] considers it a remarkable feature of the Austrian proposal that the Vienna Cabinet has assumed the standpoint of the agreement of 1910, viz., the maintaining of the status quo and the principle of peaceable development. While agreeing, on principle, to the Austrian proposal, or rather to its second part, since the first does not concern Italy, the Italian Government thinks, as we do, that the steps which Austria proposes should be taken in the

[1] Then attached to the French foreign office.
[2] Italian minister of foreign affairs.

Balkan capitals might become dangerous. In his opinion the Austrian initiative will remain a dead letter.

The representatives of the Balkan States called on me today and told me their Governments were extremely disturbed by the Austrian proposal. *I tried to reassure them by declaring that the Russian Government reckons on their political acumen and will hardly proffer new advice.* The Bulgarian Minister declared that, if Turkey refuses immediately to introduce reforms in Macedonia and to appoint a Christian governor, *his Government will be forced forthwith to declare war on Turkey, as otherwise a revolution would break out in Bulgaria.*

(426) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug. 19-Sept. 1, 1912.*

Paléologue confidentially informed me that the British Government agreed to an exchange of views among the Entente Powers, but that it insisted that eventual steps should be undertaken conjointly by all five Powers. England has in mind the European Concert and dreads anything that might produce rivalry among the two groups of Powers, but fears above all a renewed strain on Austro-Russian relations.

(427) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, Aug. 16-29, 1912.*

I need no longer point to the alarming news which reaches this place from the Balkan States. *Encouraged by the conclusion of secret alliances, and convinced of their superiority, the Balkan States have only one idea: not to allow the favourable moment to pass, and to throw themselves into the fight as soon as possible. The existence of such plans has been confirmed under my very eyes, almost hourly, by the ever increasing nervousness of my Balkan colleagues here.* All of them, and chief among them the Bulgarian Minister, continually address the following question to me:

"When will Russia at last begin to act?"

You will admit such a spirit to be dangerous in the extreme. Under these circumstances the slightest disturbances at Constanti-

nople may lead to warlike complications. On the other hand such disturbances are all the more likely since the battle of the political parties at Constantinople has set in anew. *It is possible that the general tension will become so great that the Balkan States will no longer ask themselves whether Russia too will move, and that they will take up arms against her will.* I believe the coming of this moment depends on a mere chance rather than on any predetermined dates, and we must, therefore, take our measures without delay. *All the more so, since we, as far as I know, have no guarantees that the Bulgarian claims will be satisfied with the erection of a Greater Bulgarian Empire within the limits set out in the Treaty of San Stefano.*[1] Personally I am of opinion that, given the slightest hope of success, Bulgarian aspiration will not turn to the South but to the East against the capital of the Ottoman Empire. I think the fact of our being unprepared will be but a further incentive for the Bulgarians to attain this long desired object, being, as they are, convinced that we have no means of preventing them.

The possibility of our being drawn into such inopportune complications, *as well as the menace to our historic ideals, force me, to repeat that we must be armed, since the events we fear can only be averted if there exists no doubt in our own mind as well as in that of the Balkan peoples that we shall not permit ourselves to be surprised by these events.*[2]

(428) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, Sept. 7-20, 1912. No.* 114.

As an armed action by Bulgaria in the near future, can no longer be averted, I take the liberty of submitting to you the following considerations: *If, in our own interests, we do not intend to allow Varna and Burgas*[3] *to be bombarded by the Turkish fleet; Turkish troops to be landed all along the entire coast of Bulgaria; and communication by cable between Odessa and Varna, and our trade with Bulgaria to be interrupted, then our Black Sea fleet will have to be ready to sail within less than two weeks.*

[1] Czar Alexander II, Liberator of the Balkan Slavs, was very fond of the Bulgarians and in this sense influenced the said treaty.
[2] A case of mother and daughter torn by the same love.
[3] Bulgarian ports on the Black Sea.

I repeat the suggestion made in my letter of August 24th, *that Russia should declare she would not allow any disturbances on the whole west coast of the Black Sea.*[1] *It is most likely the Sublime Porte will yield and will understake not to send its fleet to the Black Sea: but, in order to get that far, we must let Turkey as well as Europe know that our fleet is ready to take a landing force on board.*

[1] Tying the hands of the Turkish government in favor of Russia's Slav friends, who were about to descend upon Turkey. A fine example of malevolent neutrality.

VII

THE CONFLICT OF RUSSIAN AND BULGARIAN POLICIES IN TURKEY

(October—November 1912)

(429) *The Russian Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Neratoff, to the President of the Ministerial Council, Secretary of State Kokowtzeff. Strictly Secret Letter.*

St. Petersburg, October 10-23, 1912.

Some time ago, the War Ministry raised the general question, what tasks the Ministry for Foreign Affairs might usefully allot to the Military Department in view of the general situation.

As this question is intimately connected with the close definition of the general problems to be solved by the Government, I think it is my duty to submit to you the following considerations which the Foreign Ministry would deem essential.

In the Balkan War, which has just begun, the following two circumstances require to be noted: First, the limited resources of both belligerent parties, especially of the Balkan States; and secondly, the necessity of reckoning with the possible success of the Balkan States as well as of Turkey.

These two eventualities must necessarily be kept in view while our immediate political tasks and our military possibilities are being determined. It is the aim of the Foreign Ministry, as soon as it may appear feasible, to unite the Powers for the purpose of intervening in the war after the first decisive actions, before the opponents' strength will have been exhausted. The possibility of such a turn of the war in the near future must be foreseen.

As two different results of the war are within the range of possibility, we must consider two different difficulties—both dangerous to us.

In case the Balkan States should gain the upper hand, and the inviolability of the territorial status quo in Turkey were to be endangered by the outcome of the war, diplomatic as well as military proceedings on the part of Austria and Roumania are not out of the question. The war preparations of both States point to this possibility, preparations which are being silently and carefully made, to which the reports of our military agents at Vienna and Bukarest testify. Looked at from the political point of view, it would appear to be useful to oppose to these measures like measures on our part, these to be taken with the utmost caution as silently as possible.

The War Ministry already reported at the meeting of the Ministerial Council on the 4th inst., on the decision arrived at by the Military Department to take such measures.

But the second eventuality must likewise be foreseen, viz., that the Turkish army might gain the upper hand or at any rate, that Turkey might reckon with the war being dragged out, in consequence whereof the Balkan States would be placed in a critical position. It is hardly to be assumed that Turkey will yield to more diplomatic pressure of the Powers, and will accept conditions alike acceptable to their opponents, quite apart from the difficulty of uniting the Powers for conjointly exerting any pressure.[1]

The representations of our diplomats will weigh in the balance, in so far as they will be backed-up by actual power. It must be borne in mind as being essential that we should be in a position to dispose of such a force at our Caucasian frontier whenever necessary, especially considering that the Turks seem to be shifting a part of their troops from our frontier to the seat of war.

Therefore, in order to prevent our being surprised by events it would, at the moment, seem equally advisable to make careful but well-planned preparations on our territory bordering on Turkey, such as the above mentioned measures with respect to Austria and Roumania.[2]

[1] An obscure phrase. It probably was intended to read *or will accept conditions acceptable to her opponents.*

[2] The contingency in mind was joint action against the Balkan allies by Turkey, Austria-Hungary and Roumania; the measures spoken of are mobilization.

I feel bound to add that, while it is extremely undesirable that any unnecessary information or noise should be spread abroad, it appears still more essential for our task of guarding the interests of Russia in maintaining peace, *that we and our rivals should be fully conscious of the fact that our diplomatic representations are properly backed-up by military force.*

Equally we may, in all probability, reckon upon the actual support of France and England only to such an extent as those two Powers shall be able to count on our preparedness to take risks.....

(430) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to the Russian Foreign Ministry. Report, Oct.* 10-23, 1912.

In pondering day and night over the various eventualitites which may come to pass, I always return, in spite of myself, to the following three possibilities: a decisive victory of the Balkan States; a like victory of the Turks; a dragging out of the war and, consequent thereon, disturbances and massacres of Christians at Constantinople or other places in the Ottoman Empire.

The first of these eventualities, and the one which, in my opinion, is least likely to come about, would, at the same time be the most dangerous in its consequences for general peace; it would push into the foreground, in all its historical significance, the question of the fight of the Slavs not only against Islam but also against the Teutons.[1] *In such a case it will hardly be possible to put one's faith in any palliative measures, and it will become necessary then to prepare for a great and decisive general European War.*

Somewhat less dangerous, from the general European standpoint, yet extremely troublesome for us, would be a decisive victory of Turkey. Such a victory would produce an enormous excitement of public opinion with us and would impose upon us the duty to come to the rescue of the Slav States.

While speaking of this, I remember that at the time of my being in charge of the Foreign Ministry, the Military Convention with Bulgaria was discussed without its being concluded (whether it has since been concluded I do not know). *The Bulgarians de-*

[1] That is Pan-Slavism against Pan-Islamism, and Pan-Slavism against Pan-Germanism.

clared that in case of a war with Turkey alone *they would require no other help from us, but that we mobilize the Caucasian military district. I also remember that at the end of* 1906 *or at the beginning of* 1907, *the then Chief of the General Staff, General Palitsyn, had on his own initiative almost brought about a war with Turkey on our Caucasian frontier.* He naïvely believed such a "guerilla war" could remain localized. With the assistance of the late Stolypin I abruptly put a stop to these attempts; *in doing so I chiefly put forward the argument that any collision between us and Turkey, even on the Caucasian frontier, would serve as a signal for the attack of the Balkan States on Turkey.*

At the present time, this argument loses its point, and it seems to me as if we were already bound to foresee that events may induce us to have recourse to the above mentioned remedy of exerting pressure on Turkey, a method which, while comparatively harmless, is at the same time effective.

As I meet Poincaré almost daily, and in confidential talks with him touch upon the most varied subjects, I considered it possible to moot this question too, with the express reservation that I was merely expressing my personal view and was thinking aloud, so to speak. At first my ideas visibly startled him. In reply he told me that such a onesided action on the part of Russia would impair the unity of action of the Powers, and would induce Austria to parallel action. This would, he was convinced, arouse great animosity against Russia in England and would lead to a rupture of the Triple Entente.

I replied that I only had in my mind the case of a decisive success of Turkey. Austria was not interested in strengthening the Turkish Empire, but only in weakening the Slav States; she would, therefore, in the case of a defeat of the latter, hardly seek ground for interfering, and would probably remain inactive in case of any complications arising between us and Turkey in the Asiatic seat of war. *To Germany such complications which would draw us away from our western frontier would only be advantageous and desirable. As for England, it was to her interests not to allow any collision between us and Turkey and to act the rôle of mediator and peace-maker.*

Today I had an opportunity of convincing myself that my conversation had not been futile and that Poincaré's attitude towards my ideas is one not only of perfect calm but also of a certain interestedness (not

to say somewhat sympathetic), because it permitted it to appear as if our intervention were forced upon us, and in that form it would be least dangerous to general peace.[1]

I hope you will not reprove me for having of my own accord broached such an important and delicate question to Poincaré. It appears to me to be in our favour if we can convince him of the inevitability of our active intervention which may, under certain circumstances, become imperative. If we should abstain from such intervention we shall, by doing so, earn the gratitude of France. If, however, the intervention becomes a fact, Poincaré will be prepared for it and will be in a position to let us enjoy his full diplomatic co-operation in localizing the trouble. I take the liberty of remarking that, if we should have to decide on mobilisation or even only on a transfer of our Caucasian troops according to the course events may take, it seems to me *that we should notify Monsieur Poincaré thereof in good time, so that he will be able to lend us adequate assistance in smoothing the way in London.*

The third eventuality, that of the war actions being dragged out without any decisive successes either on the one or the other side, would appear to be particularly favourable to collective mediation by the Powers, and will probably relieve us of the necessity of onesided active intervention. On the other hand, such an eventuality may provoke internal unrest and massacres of Christians in Constantinople or other places in the Ottoman Empire. It is very difficult to foresee such events, either as to their extent or to their nature, and to predetermine the measures that may possibly appear imperative. I consider it expedient, however, to take this opportunity of reminding you of the negotiations which took place in 1896 between the Powers on the occasion of the Armenian massacres and the disturbances which were expected in Constantinople.

On the initiative of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs,[2] Monsieur Hanotaux, it was proposed to concentrate a number of warships, I think two each of every Power, near the Dardanelles. The reply of the Russian Government was handed to the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg in the form of a strictly secret mem-

[1] Indicating how far the enterprising Iswolsky could take the initiative.
[2] In 1896.

orandum and communicated to Baron Mohrenheim[1] at Paris *in strict secrecy for his personal information.* Unfortunately, I have not been able to find this memorandum in the archives of the Embassy, neither has it so far been found in the French Foreign Ministry. I remember that, in declaring ourselves in agreement with Monsieur Hanotaux's proposal, we made a reservation with regard to any separate actions of our Black Sea Fleet which might appear necessary, *including, if I am not mistaken, the possibility of our occupying some points on the Bosporus.*[2] I recalled this precedent at the time of the Constantinople revolution in 1908 when disturbances were also expected there. *Do you believe that it would be useful at the present juncture to recall this precedent to mind?* In conversations with me, Poincaré repeatedly acknowledged that the possibility might arise not only of undertaking purely diplomatic actions under certain circumstances, but also of arranging collective demonstrations of, either all the Powers, or of separate groups. It is most desirable that the nature of such steps should be settled beforehand and that the Cabinets be prepared in case of any sudden emergency arising.

In mentioning the calm judgment and even a certain interest which Poincaré took in the idea of the possibility of any pressure being exerted by Russia on Turkey by mobilizing or transferring the troops in the Caucasus, *I forgot to add that, nevertheless, Monsieur Poincaré very insistently urged the necessity of exhausting all means of collective influence of the Powers over Turkey in case of the latter's victorious advance against the Balkan States, before resolving upon such measures.* In doing so Monsieur Poincaré said he was confident that such influence, if exerted as unanimously as the case required, would necessarily prove effective. He also still believes that the Powers might, in case of the Turkish arms being favoured by the fortunes of war, successfully continue to make representations to the Sublime Porte in favour of serious reforms in Macedonia. I did not conceal from him that I had but little faith in such a possibility, and that I believed that none but a Turkey vanquished and exhausted would allow any interference of the Powers in this matter.

[1] Russian ambassador at Paris at that time.
[2] In violation of all Straits Treaties then in force.

(431) *Sazonoff's report to the Czar on his journey abroad in Sept.-Oct. 1912. Extract.*

The situation in the Balkans which has for some time now been very unsatisfactory has become further aggravated during my absence abroad. Accordingly, all questions connected with it have become of primary importance and have played a most prominent part in my negotiations with the statesmen of England, France and Germany.

It was clear to all of them, that conditions in the Balkans, if allowed to develop uncontrolled, might take so threatening a turn that the Great Powers, too, would unavoidably be involved in extremely dangerous complications. It was equally clear that the imminent danger could only be averted by a common and immediate influence being brought to bear by all the Great Powers.

In this respect my presence in the most important European Capitals at such a serious moment seemed extremely opportune, as personal exchange of views with the leaders of the foreign policy of England, France and Germany simplified and expedited those negotiations which were aimed at the establishment of unity among the Powers and intended to render their actions uniform.

While still at Balmoral, Poincaré made known to Your Majesty the proposal which contained 4 points the acceptance of which should, according to the opinion of the author of the plan, be urged on Austria and Germany by Russia, France and England. The third point mentioned, which refers to the possibility of coercive measures against Turkey, did not meet with the approval of the Cabinet of St. James which did not even wish any allusion made to such a possibility.

In the meantime our Ambassador at Paris, acting on my instructions, succeeded in making it clear to Poincaré that the key to the situation was to be found at Vienna, as any action of the other Powers would remain ineffective, if Austria were not to join the Powers for the purpose of amicably settling the disturbances and if she were to undertake any onesided steps, so that we ourselves might be forced *to abandon the policy of non-intervention to which we honestly wish to adhere.* In view of these circumstances, the French Government presented a new proposal, according to which the Powers were to depute Russia and Austria—these being the States most interested in the maintenance of order in the Balkans—

to make, on behalf of the Great Powers, declarations in the Balkan capitals, with the object of preventing the outbreak of hostilities. This proposal was, as is well known to Your Majesty, accepted by all, with the amendment proposed by England, according to which an adequate declaration should be made at Constantinople by the representatives of all the five Great Powers.

Before the answer arrived from Vienna I, for my part, availed myself of a meeting with the Austrian Ambassador, on my return journey in London, to ask him to draw his Government's attention to the fact that we attach the greatest importance to Austria's co-operation with the other Powers at the present disquieting moment. *In doing so I gave Count Mensdorff to understand that the "sine qua non" for Russia's non-interference in the Balkan troubles was a like attitude on the part of Austria-Hungary.* As regards Poincaré's proposal, concerning a joint action of Russia and Austria on behalf of the remaining Powers, I am inclined to observe towards it a sympathetic attitude, *since the proposal, to a certain degree, restrains Austria's freedom of action and affords us at the same time an occasion for a lively exchange of views with the Vienna Cabinet without the initiative coming from us.*

During my three days' stay at Paris, the Balkan affairs were matter of the deepest concern to the European Cabinets, and formed the major part of my negotiations with Poincaré.

After the French Foreign Minister had consulted with me, he worked out the formula for the declaration to be made in the Balkan Capitals and tried to obtain the consent of the Powers as quickly as possible.

Whilst I received the representatives of the Sublime Porte and of the Balkan States in London, Paris, and Berlin I strongly advised them to be reasonable. At Paris, Poincaré and I once even received the representatives of Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece together, in order thus to lend more weight to our representations.

I repeatedly pointed out to the Turkish Ambassador in London, Tewfik Pasha, that it was desirable for the Sublime Porte to conclude peace with Italy because there was hope that that would moderate the zeal of the remaining opponents of the Sublime Porte and thus the outbreak of hostilities might be prevented. As a matter of fact, the effect of the Italo-Turkish war was favouring the

Balkan peoples in their endeavour to solve their chronic quarrels by force of arms, and I heard much regret that the Powers had at that time not paid sufficient heed to Russia's appeal to make an end of the war in Tripoli, before the conflagration in the Balkans began.

The successive negotiations in England, Paris, and Berlin which were occasioned by the circumstances explained, enable me to form a fairly clear conception, based on personal impressions, of the varied attitudes of the three Great Powers in the Balkan question.

All actions of England are, at present, dominated by one paramount anxiety, viz.; *not to draw upon herself the anger of the Mussulman world, so that she might rely upon the Mohammedan part of the Indian population for the necessary security of British rule.*[1] *Hence the seeming indifference towards the fate of the Christians living under the sway of Turkey,*[2] *which is contrary to England's former attitude; hence the irresolute policy in Persia and Central-Asia.*

Apart from this, England is guided by the desire not to weaken the present Ottoman Government in which the Anglophile, Kiamil Pasha, is playing an important rôle, as well as to prevent the Young Turks with Ferid Pasha from coming into power,—the latter being a friend of Germany.

These considerations make it clear why England, in spite of every wish to contribute, together with the other Powers, towards the pacification of the Balkans, has, nevertheless, often been detrimental to the common cause by hesitating to consent to this or that measure, for fear of the impression it might make at Constantinople.

In considering the above one may positively assert that it would be impossible to rely on England's support once further complications were to call for any energetic pressure on the Sublime Porte.[3]

In France, the complications in the Balkans have aroused anxieties of a twofold nature by which the conduct of our Ally in the present events has been governed.

[1] In India; which depends mainly upon factional strife between Mohammedan and Hindoo.

[2] In which Russia took interest only because they were Slavs of the Greek Orthodox faith, so far as the Balkans were concerned, or were Armenians whose hostility toward the Ottoman government promoted Russia's "historic mission."

[3] A wise conclusion.

First, France is troubled by the idea that events in the Balkans might in one way or another cause the intervention of the most-interested Powers, viz., Russia and Austria, thereby in turn implicating France in the war. *It was fear of that nature which especially moved Monsieur Poincaré to remind us last summer in a perfectly friendly and confidential manner, that, according to the letter of the Treaty of Alliance, only an attack by Germany upon Russia constituted a case for putting France's obligations towards us into effect.*[1]

Secondly, France has invested considerable capital in various undertakings in the Balkans and, consequently, she cannot be an indifferent spectator of the disturbances which are brewing there and through which she is liable to sustain material losses.

It is for these reasons that the French Government is striving so strenuously for a peaceable solution of the collisions which have taken place, and has taken the initiative in a number of proposals which are aimed at this object.

At Berlin, I was enabled to establish the fact that, on the whole, Germany is but little concerned at the war of the Balkan States, but following the example of France, Germany dreads being implicated in a European war as a consequence of her treaty obligations, and in case war in the Balkans should be inevitable, she is ready to do anything to localize such a war. From this viewpoint, Poincaré's proposal to depute Russia and Austria to announce the will of Europe at Sofia, Belgrade, Cettinje and Athens was sympathetically received at Berlin, all the more so because there evidently exists at the present moment some doubt as to the inclination of the Vienna Cabinet to listen to the advice given it by its northern Ally, and the Germans, therefore, prefer not to put their influence at Vienna to the test, being afraid they will no longer meet with the former obedient attention there. It seems to me that this state of affairs is, to a certain degree, explained by the fact that Austria is not averse to accentuating her independence of Germany, profiting, as she does, by Germany being obliged to adhere to the alliance with Austria and being afraid of standing isolated among all the Great Powers.[2]

[1] The *casus foederis;* a strong reminder.

[2] A very able estimate of the case. Sazonoff contradicts here the many statements of an opposite meaning he made during the European War. Germany was obliged to either back up Austria-Hungary or stand alone—what that would have meant these documents show very clearly.

At any rate, they have repeatedly assured me at Berlin of their being prepared beforehand to approve of any measures upon which Russia and Austria had agreed.

The same shades in the attitude of the above-mentioned Powers, towards the general situation in the Balkans, may also be observed in their views of the separate questions connected with the Near East.

(432) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 8-21, 1912. No. 267.*

Personal. Very confidential.

War and the possibility of complications are dreaded here more and more; one has but little faith in the program which has been limited by Poincaré's formulas. Attention turns towards the question of Austro-Russian relations. The opinion gains ground more and more that, if an agreement could be arrived at between Vienna and ourselves, it would be received with satisfaction in all quarters. The part played by the most interested Powers would be acknowledged as being fully justified and, furthermore, the co-operation of Russia with Austria would offer an absolute guarantee of disinterestedness, which might perhaps be the only means of frustrating attempts at sowing dissension. *The complete confidence of the British Government in ours would not suffice. Nevertheless, this confidence is so great that any Russian initiative in the direction alluded to would meet with the active support of England.*[1] Perhaps such an initiative might be substituted for the French program in the following manner: Russia and Austria would receive a new mandate from Europe for intervening with the Balkan States at the opportune moment, and this step would promptly be supported at Constantinople by all the Powers. The basis for the peace conditions, which should be communicated to the belligerents at the moment of intervention, would be about as follows:

The complete integrity of Turkey in the City and District of Constantinople.

Nominal Turkish sovereignty in all the remaining provinces of European Turkey.

[1] Too optimistic a statement.

Introduction of organic reforms under the joint control and guarantee of the Great Powers.

No territorial modifications for the belligerents.[1]

This plan has, in my opinion, the following advantages: Russia's real interests will be protected; her international prestige and her future authority will be strengthened; a guarantee for the maintenance of peace between Russia and Austria; all intrigues which poison the present situation will be frustrated; finally, a much more effectual and more expedite program than that of the French.

I am not in a position to judge whether so definite an agreement between ourselves and Austria is feasible. The present attitude of Austria however seems favourable to it, especially if the word autonomy be not uttered.[2] Neither do I know whether difficulties of quite another nature would be created in Russia, but I believe England's support would be assured to you. I have good grounds for assuring that.

In order not to hurt the feelings of the French, I think it would be correct first to consult Grey in strict confidence. If this meets with your approval, I myself can do so personally. We can be sure of his maintaining silence. Kindly reply.

(433) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 8-21, 1912. *No.* 268.

I told Nicolson at the time, in strict confidence, of the conclusion of the Serbo-Bulgarian Alliance. Nicolson was already aware of it, probably through the Paris Cabinet. At that time he considered this Convention to be aimed against the possibility of an Austrian aggression. He made no further comment and only said that he had no faith in the discretion of King Ferdinand and would not be surprised if the latter were secretly to send some kind of information about this subject to the Vienna Cabinet.

(434) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 8-21, 1912. *No.* 269.

Grey gave me Buchanan's telegram to read, in which the latter reports his interview with you of the 5th-18th. You drew the atten-

[1] The Balkan Allies and Turkey.
[2] In regard to Albania, upon which Austria-Hungary insisted.

tion to the necessity of the Powers, above all Russia, England, and France, coming to as definite an understanding as possible upon those proposals which might, when some favourable opportunity presents itself, form the basis of an intervention. Grey entirely shares your view. He does not wish to enter further upon these proposals today and wishes to say only this:

It is his opinion that, in any case, even if Turkey should win a decisive victory, the order of things in the Turkish provinces inhabited by Christians must be fundamentally changed; that radical reforms with the direct co-operation of the Powers have become imperative; if this should hurt the national pride of the Turks, there was no other way than to maintain, as far as possible, a purely nominal Turkish sovereignty; he was in favour of the maintenance of the territorial status quo; and, lastly, Turkey should on no account be allowed to gain any advantage.

Grey has certain doubts regarding Crete. He thinks the fate of this island should be determined by all the Great Powers in concert, including Turkey. Personally he would only oppose the annexation of Crete by some other Great Power; the same applies also to the Greek islands which were occupied by Italy. Here I interjected that surely I was right in assuming that England herself had not cast her eyes on those islands? In reply Grey said to me:

"By no means," and added that the words ascribed to Cartwright [1] were a pure invention. I confidentially asked Grey whether he was opposed to these islands being simply annexed by Greece? He replied he would raise no objections if the Powers gave their consent.

(435) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 8-21, 1912. *No.* 270.

I refer to telegram No. 269.

Grey, thereupon, continued the discussion, quite confidentially, *and said he had heard to his regret that the Russian press accused him of obstructing the Russian policy in Turkey in order to spare the feelings of the Mohammedans.*[2] Grey told me he considered these reproaches unjustified, and that it was only in connection with Persia,

[1] British ambassador at Vienna.
[2] Which was perfectly true, and sound politics.

on the occasions of such incidents as, for example, that in Meshed, that he had pointed out that England considered it important to spare these feelings. What he had just told me with reference to the outcome of this war, in so far as Turkey was concerned, was surely a proof that the consideration, paid to these feelings, played only a very subordinate part. *He hopes the Russian Government will, in return, make things easy for him in Persia, because the Turkish question will certainly cause him difficulties; however, these would certainly have no effect on England's attitude.*

The entire conversation with Grey proves that he has completely veered round in his opinions, in the interests of the maintenance of the Entente, and that he is resolved, for the sake of the Entente, to grant far greater concessions at the cost of Turkey than he was prepared to grant hitherto. I look upon this discussion with Grey as very important.

(436) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Oct. 9-22, 1912.*

Yesterday, I sent you several telegrams of special importance, particularly one in which Grey accepts your proposal with reference to an immediate exchange of views. I thereupon asked him whether he had any proposals to make.

Grey spoke first of the reproach levelled against him as to his being too considerate of the Caliph. Then he discussed those points which have been established at Paris: The Sultan's remaining at Constantinople, reforms, territorial integrity.

He said nothing with regard to the first point. His silence, however, leads me to assume that he upholds it. His remarks as to the reforms were particularly exhaustive. He desires them to be very radical; under the control and guarantee of the Powers; *not even a definite victory should be permitted to bring any advantage to Turkey. I do not wish to draw any premature conclusions regarding the third point, concerning the question of integrity. Grey had already excluded territorial gains in Turkey's favour; in a reversed sense he seemed to be less positive. That is all I can say.*

As regards the nominal Turkish sovereignty, his words mean that he would concede a minimum: "So many forms of Turkish sovereignty have already been found, that it ought to be easy to come to an understanding." *As you see, he has not really added*

anything but he has circumscribed the question in a pro-Slav, or rather pro-Christian sense and cleared the whole situation.

This would have been significant in any case; but it is so all the more because Grey's standpoint was thoroughly considered. I have heard a good deal about the mental work done within the Cabinet. Nicolson's influence and astute intelligence have largely contributed to it; probably also this or that letter from Buchanan;[1] some people likewise assert, without my being certain thereof,—the King.

You can easily imagine that I did not assume the rôle of counsel for the defence of the Russian press before the Foreign Office. I have, nevertheless, answered in the affirmative to the oft repeated question, addressed to me in Parliamentary circles: "Is there really a strong current in Russia, stronger than was expected?" I have clearly seen that the following dilemma must be settled:

A further sparing of the feelings of the Caliph to a degree inconsistent with the Entente with Russia; or, on the other hand, an upholding of the Entente and only a minimum of regard for the Caliph, i.e., the Sultan's remaining at Constantinople.

The Entente has carried off the victory.

I knew this before my interview with Grey, and it was for this reason that I sent you my confidential telegram No. 267.

I am grateful to Grey for having taken a definite stand today while the fight within his own party is still going on, and while the Sultan's cause still enjoys strong sympathies. *This evolution of Grey's reveals courage.*

In conclusion: As long as the Sultan remains at Constantinople, Grey will agree to everything calculated to maintain the peace. Consequently, any solution acceptable to us and to Austria will be also acceptable to him. But he has no sympathy with the Austrian plans in the Balkans; thus, our program, and not that of Austria—if there be such a program—will be supported by him, to the extent just outlined and in the interests of the Entente.[2]

Now, what is chiefly occupying my mind is, above all things, this question: Will it be possible for us to come to an understand-

[1] British ambassador at St. Petersburg.

[2] The documents show that Benckendorff mistook his man, especially in the important matter of getting a seaport for the Serbs on the Adriatic.

ing with Austria as to radical and lasting reforms? One can now foresee that certain reforms will obstruct Austria's path still more than would a Greater Serbia. *I say Austria, for I really do not see any other danger, because it appears to me proved that no other Power could desire war.*

If, from a personal point of view, the result of your visit has been most satisfactory to Grey and yourself, matters are not quite so propitious between Paris and London. No special significance attaches to this but things are not as they should be. I do not know Paléologue. He is not particularly well-liked here, and an important rôle is ascribed to him.

Lichnowsky's [1] appointment has been well received.

(437) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 11-24, 1912. *No.* 275.

Confidential. Cambon informs me that Nicolson had expressed his view to the effect that one of the Great Powers must work out a schedule of reforms, and even if it were not complete it should, nevertheless, be well defined in its main points so that it might be proposed to the other Powers. *Nicolson thinks Russia would be the proper Power for this, and it would be best if Russia were to come to an understanding with Austria before submitting her proposals to the other Powers.*

It is my impression that formulas that are being continually supplemented are not looked upon as practicable here.

(438) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Oct.* 11-24, 1912. *No.* 2314.

Your telegram No. 267 received.

We consider the basic principles referred to therein to be perfectly acceptable and have communicated them to Paris for an editorial revision. We should think it possible to omit any mention of the guarantee of the reforms by the Powers since the idea of a conference also implies a guarantee. We intend simultaneously to occupy ourselves with working out a concrete program of reforms which would be at our disposal at any time even supposing con-

[1] German ambassador at London.

siderable modifications would have to be made in it in accordance with the events of the war.

We should like to know whether the basic principles mentioned by you were formulated by Grey or whether they resulted from your general observations on the spot. *We draw your attention to the fact that a joint action of Russia with Austria alone cannot take place under any circumstances, even if it should be taken in the name of all the other Powers.* The improvement in our relations to Vienna has enabled us to localize the war, but in the matter of positive problems connected with the intervention as well as with the liquidation of the war, we count upon the closest possible understanding with France, England and Italy.

(439) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct.* 15-28, 1912. *No.* 282.

Referring to your program of reforms, Nicolson told me yesterday that, if the success of the Allies continues and develops yet further, your plan would very likely no longer accord with the new conditions. He reiterated his personal opinion that it would be difficult to uphold the principle of territorial integrity. He referred to the opinion expressed in nearly the whole of the English press. I assured him you had reserved for yourself the freedom of modifying the program in accordance with the requirements of the moment and that, therefore, territorial acquisitions in favour of the Allies [1] were not precluded.

I think Nicolson's words reflect the views of the British Government. I can only confirm what Nicolson said about the English press. The evolution is as sudden as it is evident. In military circles, however, the possibility of a Turkish army, concentrated near Constantinople, being able to bring about a change in the situation, is not wholly precluded—if only this army be not completely demoralised.

(440) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 16-29, 1912. *No.* 283.

My conversation with Nicolson to-day again referred to your program of reforms. I asked him if he was acquainted with it. He

[1] Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro. This statement was not in accord with what the documents reveal.

replied—not entirely. I considered it necessary to communicate to him the contents of your telegram No. 2358. Nicolson's reply was about the same as yesterday; he showed particular interest when I described to him the zone reserved for the Sultan. I furthermore told him that I could also confidentially inform him of your views on the maintenance of the *status quo*. I told him you were fully conscious of the fact that for us the maintenance of the *status quo ante* could not be looked upon as a principle, so that, *if one or the other Power should express itself in favour of its modification to the advantage of the Allies,*[1] *it would be psychologically impossible for Russia to raise objections.*

Nicolson said he understood this perfectly. *I told him the reason why you had expressed yourself so carefully in this respect was, that you were afraid territorial aggrandizement of the Balkan States might evoke demands for proportionate compensation on the part of other Powers.* I mentioned, as a first instance, Roumania. I did not wish in any way to express an opinion as to Austria's intentions, but that you had been taken unawares by the sudden and unexpected veering round of opinion at Vienna; the question of the Sandjak should not be allowed to be raised; besides the matter need not necessarily deal with territorial compensations—any other project, imposed as a condition, might secure Austria a predominating influence in the Balkans. This would be unacceptable to us.

I told Nicolson that, in case of mediation, Russia must protect herself against such a contingency. Nicolson told me that what he had just heard had made a great impression upon him. He inquired whether he might summarize the whole situation as follows: Our plan of reforms depends on events which might necessitate territorial changes.

The necessity of a declaration of disinterestedness on the part of the mediatory Powers.

The Maritza to form the boundary of the undiminished authority of the Sultan.[2]

I replied that I agreed with this definition, and added that you

[1] The Balkan Allies.

[2] The military success of the Balkan Allies had made consideration of this matter necessary. The Turkish forces had been defeated in a series of well-planned actions, due largely to the military ability of the Bulgars.

believed it necessary to expedite the mediation, the French taking the initiative.

Nicolson said he would discuss what he had just heard with no one but Grey.

(441) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 17-30, 1912. *No.* 284.

I refer to my telegram No. 283.

During my conversation with Nicolson, I purposely said nothing as to what kind of agreements or treaty between Austria and Serbia we were afraid of. My mode of procedure was devised to prove that a declaration of disinterestedness was necessary in any case; mainly, however, because Austria's altered standpoint regarding the territorial *status quo* might point to the possibility of Austria seeking compensation of some other kind—say, by means of an agreement or an alliance or a commercial treaty, imposed moreover as a condition—which would signify a very considerable compensation irreconcilable with Russian interests.

In this case Austria would not assume a disinterested, but a conditional attitude, by keeping above everything else her eyes on her own individual interests. *I think this is important; for, if we already permitted it to be foreseen today that we shall, at some future date, seek to prevent Austria from coming to an understanding with the aggrandized Balkan States in matters economic, the parts in the play would be interchanged.* I doubt whether in this case we would enjoy the actual support of the western Powers. For, if an economic arrangement between sovereign States, in accordance with their mutual interests might in the future forestall the danger of a European war, it appears to me that such an arrangement would be approved of by public opinion as well as by the Governments of the Western Powers. *On the other hand, however, one cannot prevent us from opposing any arrangement whatsoever, if from the beginning it be conceived by Austria as some condition to be imposed. This is in my opinion an incontrovertible principle, precisely as it will be necessary to establish a certain balance between the territorial acquisitions of the belligerent Balkan States, especially between Bulgaria and Serbia.*

(442) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Confidential Letter, Oct.* 18-31, 1912. *No.* 675.

Latterly, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs has repeatedly emphasized, during his conversations with M. Iswolsky, that it appeared to him highly desirable that more explicit information concerning the substance of the Serbo-Bulgarian Alliance and Russia's attitude in this question be given to Grey.[1] In consideration of the fact that the proposed mediation of the Powers permits of the closest intercourse possible between St. Petersburg, Paris and London, we consider it desirable that you should now once more revert with Grey to these questions which you had already discussed with him last Spring.

You may tell him the Russian Government had been aware of the fact that Geshoff had at the time given information to the London Cabinet as to this subject, through the medium of the British Minister at Sofia; *it was, therefore, not necessary for you to speak with Grey explicitly about this treaty, the less so as this treaty was to be kept strictly secret as desired by the two interested Governments.*

Now, with reference to the treaty between Bulgaria and Serbia itself, I direct your attention to the standpoint assumed by Russia in this matter from the very beginning.

The Imperial Government was, at the time, kept informed of the course of negotiations between Sofia and Belgrade. These were based upon the considerations that an end must be made of the fratricidal feuds between them by a demarcation of their mutual interests and by exactly determining their respective spheres of influence in the territories of European Turkey.

On this condition the agreement between the two States was fully approved by us. For we had always seen in the discord between Serbia and Bulgaria an impediment in the way of a pacification of the Balkans. In consequence of mutual distrust, there prevailed an unhealthy and heavy atmosphere of intrigue and political machinations, which made it impossible to further the real

[1] The documents show that the Balkan League was formed under Russian auspices and that the Russian government was its guiding genius until the Balkan governments "kicked over the traces." It is all too evident that Sazonoff is prompting Benckendorff in this letter for the benefit of Grey, instead of recording a fact, as it would seem at first glance.

national interests of either State. Everything calculated to conduce to the purifying of this atmosphere was cordially welcomed by us.

Since we presumed that the new relations between Serbia and Bulgaria would prove the more permanent the less pressure there was brought to bear by a third party, we did not interfere in the direct negotiations between the Cabinets of Sofia and Belgrade. When the treaty was signed and we were notified of it we found in it a great deal that went beyond the objectives described above and that was bound to cause us to entertain serious misgivings. However, the main object, that of putting an end to the abnormal relations that existed between two neighbouring peoples related by ties of blood, was achieved. We did not wish to jeopardize this result by raising objections and protests. *In this treaty, Russia's rôle was established as that of the supreme arbiter in cases of differences of opinion.* We were not asked whether we agreed to Russia being mentioned in a Bulgaro-Serbian treaty, but if we rejected such a proposal we were bound to fear that we should influence the further development of the policy of the two countries in an undesirable sense. These considerations have caused us to refrain from raising any objections.

This, from the very beginning, has been our standpoint with regard to the Bulgaro-Serbian Treaty. At the present moment that part of the treaty which refers to an exact delimitation in case of a victorious war with Turkey, is of special practical significance.

By virtue of this treaty, all territories conquered conjointly will belong to the two signatory Powers as a joint dominion, and these conquests will be divided immediately, but not later than within three months after the conclusion of peace, in the following manner:[1] (here follows an exact determination of the geographical boundaries between Serbia and Bulgaria).

In bringing the foregoing to your notice I beg to draw your attention to the fact that the exact delimitation of these territories does not signify in our eyes a final determination of the boundaries, but merely

[1] Consult map of Balkan showing frontiers established definitely by Peace Treaty of Bucharest, 1913. With exception of Dobrudja frontier and boundary between Bulgaria and Serbia in Macedonia these were the lines drawn.

a suggestion as to the mutual relation of the interests of both States; this relation then has been acknowledged by both, and we shall see to it that the proper balance shall be established within this relation should occasion arise which might make compensations necessary.

(443) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct.* 18-31, 1912. *No.* 2403.

I am telegraphing to Sofia. We must reckon with fresh Bulgarian successes in the near future. A dangerous situation would be created by a siege along the line of Chatalja.[1] In this case, we fear a change in the public opinion of Europe to the disadvantage of Bulgaria, and the possibility that the Turkish capital might be occupied by international forces, in order to counteract the danger of extensive riots breaking out there and to protect the interests of Turkey's creditors. Among these latter, France and England rank first. It is not to be supposed that these two States are going to sacrifice their interests, even if Russia were to seek to restrain them from taking action of any kind. If, then, a change of opinion unfavourable to the Balkan League were to take place at Paris and London, there is no doubt but that such a contingency would be utilized at Vienna and Bucharest, and we have little hope that we should then be able, as heretofore, to keep Austria and Roumania from intervening.[2]

All these considerations lead us to advise the Bulgarian Government, in a friendly but earnest spirit, to recognise the necessity of prudence and to halt in time. We assume that in this case, and before a possible failure at Chatalja has become a fact, the Balkan States might count on territorial acquisitions. In any case, they have been assured of the full support of our diplomacy on the condition, well known to Bulgaria, that all compensations in the shape of reforms or territorial acquisitions will be limited by a line which runs from the mouth of the Maritza by way of Adrianople to the Black Sea. From this line on, the whole territory belonging to Constantinople must remain under the actual sovereignty of the Sultan.[3] *No compromises whatsoever are pos-*

[1] Line of fortifications protecting Constantinople from the West.
[2] Austria had no such intention, and Sazonoff himself later encouraged Rumania to invade Bulgaria.
[3] Sazonoff had in reality reserved it for Russia.

sible in this matter. We hope that Bulgaria will not place herself and Russia in the difficult position of our having to accentuate this still more emphatically at Sofia. Please inform us of the outcome of your interview with Geshoff.

(444) *Sazonoff to the Russian Embassies at Paris and London. Telegram, Oct.* 18-31, 1912. *No.* 2405.

I refer to my telegram No. 2403. Personal.

Friendly, but earnest, representations by France and England at Sofia and Belgrade would be greatly welcomed by us, but these should not bear the character of a premeditated action among the Powers and must not permit our initiative to become noticeable.

(445) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct.* 19-*Nov.* 1, 1912. *No.* 290.

Your telegram No. 2405 received. Personal.

I beg you to observe that the latest developments have produced so deep an impression here that all interest in the cause of the Turks has vanished. As yet I cannot judge how far this feeling will go, but it may go very far. *Grey will meet with strong opposition in Parliament against the preservation of Turkey in the Balkans except at Constantinople.* I will not, however, venture any comment upon what impression the occupation of Constantinople by the Bulgarians would produce here.

(446) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Oct.* 20-*Nov.* 2, 1912.

We have accepted the following proposals of France:

1. The Powers will take a collective step with the belligerent States for a suspension of hostilities.

2. The sovereignty of the Sultan at Constantinople and in the adjoining territory will be maintained without any restrictions.

3. In the remaining parts of European Turkey the national, political and administrative institutions will be changed in accordance with the requirements of each district; and this is to be done in such a manner that the interests of all interested States will be properly balanced.

4. For the purpose of conjointly settling the various questions involved, the Powers will meet at a conference to which the belligerent States and Roumania shall also be invited.

I am giving further explanations of our standpoint in telegram No. 2423.

(447) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct. 20-Nov. 2, 1912. No. 2423.*

According to our view, intervention in the war by the Powers can be successful only if this step be undertaken without delay. The general interest in the security of Constantinople calls for the creation of a zone of defense which would be subject to the actual sovereignty of the Sultan. The boundary of this district is defined, as you know, by a line running from the Mouth of the Maritza, including Adrianople, to the Black Sea. *The whole remaining part of European Turkey should, in our opinion, be divided among the Allies by virtue of the right of actual occupation. In this matter we are prepared to stand for the maximum of what can be achieved.*

By this means, a lasting peace would be assured in the Balkans, and the difficult proceedings connected with mediation would be simplified. Nothing but the speedy and unanimous consent of the Powers to these conditions can avert the danger of the occupation of Constantinople by the Balkan Allies; such occupation might entail European complications, for, if the Allies are not given a definite promise by the Powers regarding the fulfilment of their wishes, they will not be able to wait any longer, and may then proceed to occupy Constantinople so as to have a pawn in hand.

Of course, several other subordinate questions would have to be examined at the same time. On principle we think it possible for us to concede the establishment of an autonomous Albania under the Sultan's sovereignty, *but in doing so it should not be forgotten that Serbia must be given access to the Adriatic Sea. A rectification of the frontier must be made between Bulgaria and Roumania in order to reward the latter for her correct attitude during the war.* We are prepared to support any steps in this direction at Sofia. We would consent to an agreement being made between Austria and Serbia for the purpose of procuring to the former facilities for the free transit of Austrian goods through the new Serbian territory.

Russia in its capacity of a great Orthodox Power deems herself entitled to defend the present independent position of the Oecumenic Patriarch.[1]

You may place yourself on the above standpoint in your negotiations with the British Government.

(448) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 20-Nov. 2, 1912. No. 295.*

Your telegrams 2403 and 2405 received.

I have spoken to Grey. He says it would be impossible to ask the Bulgarians to halt before the line of Chatalja because that would mean a sacrifice which might enable the Turks to concentrate again and to frustrate the results hitherto attained in the war. He says that public opinion in England would express itself so categorically in favour of Bulgaria that he could not put forward such a demand. He thinks he may assume that your telegram was despatched before the news of the latest victory of the Bulgarians, which seems to have been a decisive one, had arrived.

Grey read me a telegram from the British Minister at Sofia. It contained the news of the complete collapse of the Turkish army and of the Bulgarian advance on Chatalja with the object of pushing on to Constantinople. Grey believes it to be too late now, and asks himself whether you are not of the same mind. I replied that, as far as Constantinople was concerned, I was certain of your opinion, and I reminded him of the vital importance attached by Russia to the question of Constantinople.[2] Grey told me he recognised the difficulty of the position and would let me know his decision later.

This morning Grey showed me an authorized Bulgarian statement in the Times. It reads:

"If the Bulgarian troops enter Constantinople, they will do so for the purpose of dictating the peace there and will then immediately withdraw again from the capital."

Grey said he was going to take this statement as a point of departure for an interview with the Bulgarian Minister here.

After this interview had taken place, Grey told me the following:

[1] Head of the Greek Orthodox Church, residing at Constantinople.

[2] Russia had reserved Constantinople for herself and did not want the Bulgarians to acquire a claim there.

He had first asked the Minister whence this statement had emanated. Madjaroff replied that it came from him and expressed his personal opinion. Grey in reply said he spoke as a friend of Bulgaria and called to witness the demonstrations of sympathy of the English for the Bulgarian Cause; he need not remind him of the sympathy of Russia, but he could only say that the standpoint of Russia with regard to Constantinople had been fixed ever since the beginning of the crisis. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance that Bulgaria should, as soon as possible remove the apprehensions of the Russian Government with regard to her intentions concerning Constantinople, for otherwise Bulgaria, threatened as she already was, with a pressure from Roumania and perhaps also from Austria, might also lose the sympathies of Russia and find herself in an extremely difficult position. Madjaroff promised immediately to telegraph the above to Sofia.

(449) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, Oct. 22-Nov. 4, 1912. No. 2455.*

In our opinion, the Allies can be restrained from occupying Constantinople only if the Powers unanimously declare to the Balkan States that the whole of European Turkey up to the well-known line via Adrianople to the Black Sea will be partitioned among them and if the Great Powers accept the standpoint set forth in my telegram No. 2423, i.e., if the economic interests of Austria be taken into due consideration. We deem it highly desirable that France should forthwith make such a proposal to the Powers. We believe the key to the whole situation is to be found at Berlin, and the success of the French proposal will, to a great extent, depend upon the influence exerted by the German Government at Vienna.

Please inform Poincaré[1] *confidentially that the occupation of Constantinople by the Balkan States would cause the simultaneous appearance of our entire Black Sea Fleet in the Turkish capital.* In order to avoid the great danger of general European complications, such as would result from an action of this nature, it is important that France exercise to the full the influence she commands at Berlin and Vienna. We draw the attention of our Ally to the fact that

[1] French minister of foreign affairs.

Russian public opinion, which follows developments in the Balkans with the most intense attention, may place the Government in an extremely difficult position.[1] *For your personal information, I add that our military authorities now consider it possible to alter their original standpoint and are prepared to grant concessions in favour of Bulgaria, as, for instance, Adrianople.*

(450) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 22-Nov. 4, 1912. No. 298.*

Your telegram No. 2423 received.

When I was about to inform Grey of its contents, he read me a telegram of Buchanan's with a very detailed report upon the same subject. I thereupon told him I had nothing to add because Buchanan's telegram contained still more details than your own. Grey said he had no objections to make; he considered the information about the Sandjak to be very important.[2] He saw in it a valuable indication of Austrian intentions. Serbia might, perhaps, make difficulties which ought, however, not to be insurmountable; at all events, he foresaw no objections from any quarter, *but the question of Serbian access to the sea was a very delicate one.* He particularly approves of the project regarding Saloniki. He shares your opinion that quick action is imperative, for it would be difficult to bring the Bulgarian army to a halt without positive guarantees being given to the Allies.

He reverted to this idea, that, in order to be able to act, it would be necessary to be fully acquainted with the Austrian conditions. He leaves it to you to choose the best way of attaining this object. He does not see why Austria could not express her wishes just as plainly as Russia. I have no doubt that Buchanan has correctly expressed your ideas, with which Grey agrees.

(451) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct. 22-Nov. 4, 1912. No. 299.*

I refer to my telegram No. 298.

Grey thereupon told me, confidentially, that, neither Buchanan's telegram, nor the telegram addressed to me, contained any

[1] The Russian government did not usually heed public opinion.

[2] The Vienna Cabinet had agreed to an eventual partition of the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar between Serbia and Montenegro, and the territory was later divided among them.

reference to the islands in the Aegaean Sea occupied by Greece. He believes that if Greece intends to keep these islands she could do so only under strictly defined conditions. It would be to the general interest that a second-rate Power should not be in a position to close the straits whenever it pleased. In this question the Russian interests were still more involved than the British; and, if he believed that he might mention Russian interests here, *this was due to the fact that the British Government had not changed its standpoint regarding the straits and also because this question must be settled in a sense favourable to Russia as soon as we considered it necessary to bring it up for discussion.* [1]

(452) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, Oct. 24-Nov. 6, 1912. No. 2474.*

We wish to oppose the temporary occupation of Constantinople by the Allies. But we wish to point out how difficult further negotiations would become in that case. If the Ottoman Government leaves Constantinople and withdraws to Asia Minor, it need fear no further losses, the Turkish army would be able to recover from the blows it has lately received, and there would be no necessity for the Sublime Porte to show any disposition to yield, because the situation could not become much worse. Something similar occurred at Pekin in 1900 when the flight of the Government delayed the negotiations which followed upon the occupation of the Chinese capital.

But any delay in the peace negotiations at the present moment might jeopardize the interests of the Balkan Allies, as they have but insufficient means at their disposal and as there is no absolute unanimity in Europe; and might subject the peace of Europe to a severe strain. On the other hand, a prolonged occupation of Constantinople by the Allies might force us likewise to send our fleet, which would remain there precisely as long as the Allies. [2] We think, therefore, that the Powers should now decide whether they want to accede to Turkey's request and take the necessary steps for mediation.

[1] The documents show that Grey was not always of that turn of mind and that he used this bait quite often to bring Russia into line.

[2] For which the French and British government were not prepared.

(453) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 25-Nov. 7, 1912. No. 307.*

Your telegram No. 2474 received.

I have informed Grey of its contents. *He says that, even though the decision of the Russian Government came as a surprise, he knew perfectly well what Constantinople signified to Russia and that he did not, therefore, wonder at our decision.* As I had used the word "escadre" Grey asked me whether that meant the fleet only.[1] I replied that your telegram contained no further intimation. Thereupon he informed me of the contents of a telegram from Lowther,[2] according to which things seem to be somewhat calmer at Constantinople. It seemed as if the Sublime Porte had again gained the upper hand, and the opinion of several foreign military agents, among others also the German, was that the troops of Constantinople, if only better equipped, would be in a position to hold the Chatalja line for some time. Lowther adds that the military agents moreover were not all of the same mind. *In reply, I told Grey that the moment for the appearance of our fleet, and also the circumstances under which it would appear had been plainly determined by us.*

(454) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct. 25-Nov. 7, 1912. No. 308.*

Personal. Grey thinks that, if the predictions in Lowther's telegram be correct, the situation would be considerably relieved. The Sultan remaining in Constantinople was the only satisfactory solution.[3] But should he leave the capital, his return would meet with serious difficulties, among others public opinion in several countries, more especially in England, would raise protests. *Since a settlement in favour of Bulgaria can not apparently be conceded, chiefly on account of Russia, he had thought of a particular combination—neutralisation and free city—as the least of other evils, nevertheless he first wished to ask you as to your opinion.*

I replied that I very much doubted whether such a project could meet with your approval, because the resulting international, eth-

[1] Grey did not know the French language.
[2] British ambassador at Constantinople.
[3] Again, Grey had veered, giving way to British public opinion.

nological, religious, and geographical difficulties would be too great. Grey said he was naturally conscious of this and he had mentioned the idea only in case it should become impossible to uphold the Turkish rule at Constantinople. I told him I could not alter my standpoint, that I was, nevertheless, grateful to him that he had mentioned this project to you first, *since no other Power was interested in the question to the same extent as Russia.* I added that the only advantage in his proposal, which I discerned, was, that it would wound national and religious feelings less than any other; *two questions had to be kept in view, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, and in this twofold respect Russia must be given special guarantees, for a mere alteration of the Paris Treaty*[1] *would not suffice in this instance.*

(455) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 27-Nov. 9, 1912. No. 276.*

From all informations received and carefully examined by me the following conclusions are to be drawn:

An agreement has been reached between the four Allies, that is to say, a block has been formed—in order to obtain the annexation of the conquered territory in any case. As regards Serbia and Bulgaria, the agreement is firm, mutual, and complete. Both States, however, have their suspicions of Greece whose eyes are principally fixed on the possession of Saloniki and even Bitoli. The Bulgarians will oppose this, wherein they will be supported by the Serbians. Montenegro's attitude, which inspires but little confidence, is chiefly perturbing the Serbians.

A particularly unpleasant impression is created by Montenegro's endeavours to put difficulties in the way of Serbia realizing her historic claims. A proof hereof: the unexpected occupation of the unfortified cloister of Detchan; the entry of the Montenegrins into Prisren which was already occupied by Serbian troops; and the open attempt to forestall the Serbians at San Giovanni. The Allies, however, are inclined to keep all this friction secret, in order to appear united against the attempts of the Powers to mediate. The demands of the Allies, which they have united to defend to the uttermost by force of arms, are the following:

[1] Of 1856.

1.) All territories conquered by their armies to form a joint-dominion which is to be divided later by mutual agreement.

2.) The Allies will not even admit the idea of an autonomous Albania or Macedonia and will oppose any such plan.

3.) Macedonia is to be divided among Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece; Albania, among Montenegro, Serbia and Greece.

4.) The special demands of Bulgaria extend in the direction of Constantinople up to a line from the Mouth of the Maritza to Lüle-Burgas—Bunar-Hissar as far as the Black Sea. There can be no idea of restoring Adrianople and Kirk-Kilissé which have cost such heavy sacrifices.[1]

5.) The special demands of Serbia comprise the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar, a narrow strip of which is to be left to Montenegro; the whole of Old-Serbia and the northern part of Albania, *with the coast from Medua as far as Cameni or Skumbia, subject to an agreement with Greece to whom falls the remaining part of this province.*

The Allies have resolved to carry through these demands jointly.

(456) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Oct. 23-Nov. 5, 1912. No. 2461.*

I am telegraphing to Paris.

The Austrian Ambassador declared to me today that his Government renounces all idea of territorial compensations in its favour.[2]

When I asked him why, in that case, the Vienna Cabinet did not accept the French formula referring to disinterestedness, Thurn replied that it is not stipulated therein that the disinterestedness applies to territorial acquisitions only.

I assume France might let Vienna have a rectification to this effect. I pointed out to Thurn that one had to reckon with Serbia's vital interest, i.e., the acquisition of an access to the Adriatic Sea, and that Austria should not oppose this, so as to be able to establish good neighbourly relations with Serbia. The Ambassador re-

[1] Especially to the Bulgarians.

[2] Austria-Hungary relinquished her special claims and right upon the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar and consented to its being annexed by Serbia and Montenegro without exacting compensation.

plied that he would forward my answer to Vienna, but that his Government must consider public opinion.

Referring to economic interests, Thurn pointed out that it was desirable to protect these by something more than simply a commercial treaty with Serbia, whereupon I replied that in my opinion there was nothing better calculated to serve that purpose than a commercial treaty.

From my conversation with the German Ambassador, I gained the impression that Berlin will try to induce Vienna to yield. I assume that, for the present, the efforts of French and English diplomacy must run parallel to our procedure and be directed towards exercising a friendly influence in that sense, without any categorical declaration being presented which might bear the character of a threat.

(457) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 24-Nov. 6, 1912. No. 302.*

The French Chargé d'Affaires has acquainted me with a telegram in which the French Ambassador at Berlin reports on an interview with the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs. The latter has expressed his personal opinion to the effect that the Powers of the Triple Alliance were thoroughly in accord and that for this reason there was no cause to expect that peace would be menaced. In the course of this interview, San Giuliano [1] maintained, in spite of Cambon's objections, *that Italy and Austria, who desired the creation of an Albanian State, insist upon the exclusion of Serbia from the Adriatic coast, and gave him to understand that the desire of Serbia to be granted an access to the sea might be satisfied in the Aegaean Sea.*

(458) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct. 25-Nov. 7, 1912. No. 306.*

Your telegram No. 2461 received.

Grey tells me he is perfectly conscious of the seriousness of the two questions regarding Austria and Serbia. He fears that the question of Serbian access to the Adriatic might, more easily, assume an acute character than that concerning the Austrian economic interests for which, in his opinion, it will prove easier to find a satisfactory settlement. I replied that this question also

[1] Italian minister of foreign affairs.

must not be too lightly estimated, since it might transform itself into an absorption, which would explain the Austrian obstinacy to exclude Serbia from the sea. I told him, Serbia would resist with the utmost energy, so that Austria might again take into consideration the project of annexation. Grey said that yesterday the Serbian Minister had indeed spoken of a very energetic declaration. This roused his fear that now it might no longer be possible to bring the demands of both countries into accord, and therefore he considered it to be more expedient to defer the solution of this question until the general settlement.

For this reason, the Powers should ask the Balkan Allies whether they would be inclined to accept mediation and to formulate their wishes themselves. Since Austria to-day stands outside the European Concert, it will not be possible to induce her to join the Powers in any action which looks like an attempt at reconciliation on the basis outlined by you; but there was no reason why Austria should take part in the action proposed by him. I learn from Mensdorff [1] that Grey has emphasized to him the necessity of modifying Austrian wishes, though he acknowledged that they were perfectly legitimate from an economic standpoint.

(459) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Rome. Telegram, Oct. 26-Nov. 8, 1912. No. 2500.*

Will you point out to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs that it is highly desirable that Austria should yield in the question of admitting Serbia to the Adriatic Sea. It is dangerous to refuse to take account of facts. *Serbia will not be satisfied with anything else and counts on the undivided support of the Balkan League, which quite accords with the warlike spirit of the peoples concerned. A Serbian naval power need not cause Austria any concern.*[2] *We are prepared seriously to consider the economic interests of Austria as well as the wishes of Austria and Italy regarding the establishment of an autonomous Albania.* We wish to secure a lasting peace in the Balkans. This is impossible, if the just interests of Serbia are not satisfied. *I assume it also corresponds with the interests of Italy that her future*

[1] Austro-Hungarian ambassador at London.

[2] Austria-Hungary and Great Britain feared that this Serbian seaport on the Adriatic might become a Russian naval base in the Mediterranean.

relations with Russia, and the Powers in solidarity with that country, be exactly defined and that therefore she will now exert influence on her Ally. In this way, Italy would also re-establish her position in the Balkan capitals, which appears to have been badly shaken by the conclusion of peace with Turkey at the moment of the declaration of war, on a purely financial basis.[1] *While discussing this matter with the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs you must try to clothe your words in as friendly a shape as possible so as not to hurt the pride of the Italians.*

(460) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, Oct. 25-Nov. 7, 1912.*

With reference to Poincaré's proposal to prevent the possibility of Austria making territorial acquisitions in the Balkans, I think it is necessary that I should give you the exact wording of Poincaré's communication, as I fear there may have been errors in my cipher telegram.

I have just telegraphed you that I think it desirable that you should return a positive reply in writing to this communication. The French proposal was made after the matter had been discussed by the Cabinet, and it expressed a perfectly new standpoint of France in the matter of the territorial aggrandizement of Austria in the Balkans. *Whereas, France, up to the present, had declared that local, so to speak, purely Balkan, events could not induce her to take any active measures, the French Government now appears to admit that an acquisition of territory on the part of Austria in the Balkan would affect the general European equilibrium and, consequently, also the special interests of France.*[2]

I did not fail to draw Poincaré's attention to the fact that, by his proposing to consult in common with us and England on the means that might be employed in preventing such acquisitions, he raises the question of the practical consequences of the agreement proposed by him. *From his reply I was able to gather that he is perfectly conscious of the fact that France may thus become involved in a*

[1] Method of the diplomatic *agent provocateur;* Sazonoff himself had been in favor of that peace.

[2] Austria had declared that she expected no territorial compensation, but wished to safeguard her economic interests in the Balkans.

warlike action. For the present, of course, he submits this question merely for our consideration, but in a conversation with me, Paléologue [1] *plainly admitted that the proposed agreement might lead to some kind of active step.* He told me that, when considering the various possible effects of this proposal, he had drawn the attention of his chief to an instance in the year 1832 when France had taken Ancona after the occupation of Ferrara by the Austrians, and had not evacuated it until after the Austrians had withdrawn from the first-named town.

It seems to me we must seriously consider all that has been said above and we must avail ourselves of this opportunity, to fix the new standpoint of the French Government in case of a possible expansion of Austria in the Balkans and to prepare for the future a joint action of Russia, France, and England in case Austria should, in the further course of developments, abandon her present standpoint of refraining from all territorial acquisitions.

(461) *Poincaré to Iswolsky, Russian Ambassador at Paris. Autograph Letter, Oct. 22-Nov. 4, 1912.*

As I have just informed you, the enigmatic attitude of Austria causes similar misgiving to the French as to the Russian Government. In agreement with the Ministerial Council, I consider it expedient that we should even now arrange a joint-action program in case Austria should seek to realize a territorial aggrandizement. You were so kind as to tell me that such a contingency was provided for in the agreements entered into at Racconigi, and that Italy as well as Russia had declared that they would oppose the territorial expansion of any Great Power in the Balkans. The French Government is likewise of the opinion that such proceedings would encourage all kinds of aspirations. I should like to know, therefore, whether the Imperial Russian Government clearly refuses as does ours, to countenance all annexations of Turkish territory by any Great Power, and whether it would be inclined to consult, in concert with France and England, as to what means should be adopted in order to prevent any such danger?

[1] Assistant to Poincaré, who later replaced the very rational Georges Louis, as French ambassador to Russia.

(462) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, Oct. 27-Nov. 9, 1912. No. 2513.*

The question of an access to the Adriatic Sea for Serbia has, during the last few days, undergone such a development as to cause us serious apprehensions. *We are still prepared, as heretofore, to lend to Serbia our active diplomatic support, in conjunction with France and England. According to reliable information, Germany and Italy are prepared to oppose, together with Austria, any territorial acquisitions by Serbia on the Adriatic Sea. The conflict arising from this must not be aggravated to the danger-point of a general European war.* The attitude of some of the Serbian representatives abroad must, for this reason, seem all the less appropriate. We learn that the Serbian representative at Berlin told Kiderlen that the Allies had already divided among themselves the whole of the Adriatic coast and Serbia was sure not only of the support of Bulgaria but also of Russia.

So far as we are concerned, we consider such a statement inadmissible. The treaty of alliance does not entitle Serbia to count on the military support of Bulgaria in the matter of Serbian access to the sea. The losses sustained by Serbia and Bulgaria during the last war make a collision appear hopeless from the very beginning. *The dispatch of Serbian troops in the direction of Durazzo, to the occupation of which Austria will not give her consent, also signifies that Serbia allows herself to be ruled by impulse. Tell Pashitch*[1] *that the Serbians must not make difficult for us the rôle we have assumed as their advocates.*

In the question of the access of Serbia to the Adriatic Sea we distinguish between the means and the end. The need is as complete a security of the economic independence of that country as possible; the means—the access to the Adriatic Sea obtained either as the result of a territorial occupation on the coast or by means of a railway connection with one port or the other, under the same conditions as those which would eventually be conceded to Austria for the transit of her goods to Saloniki. *If Serbia yields in the matter of acquiring an Adriatic port of her own, then it will be possible to insist upon the other conditions, as for instance, the territorial expansion of Serbia to the south, or the greatest possible*

[1] Serbian minister of foreign affairs and premier.

limitation of Albanian territory. If Austria fail to understand that it is to her own interest that permanent peace in the Balkans be assured, we assume that at least Serbia—who emerges from the war with conquests to her credit far beyond anything she could formerly have hoped for—must now understand that, by putting forward excessive demands, she would now jeopardize what she has achieved. It is to the interest of Serbia that she does not set her demands too high, as their non-fulfilment would merely hurt Serbian pride all the more.

(463) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct. 29-Nov.* 11, 1912. *No.* 2526.

Austria's resolve to oppose the acquisition of an Adriatic port by Serbia cannot be shaken we are informed, and meets with the approval of Austria's Allies. *On the other hand, France and England openly declare that they have no inclination of rendering the conflict with the Triple Alliance more acute on that account. We on our part are warning Serbia not to count upon her being able to involve us. We are not going to war with the Triple Alliance on account of a Serbian port on the Adriatic.*

As to the alleged resolve of the Allies to divide among themselves the whole of European Turkey, regardless of the interests of Austria and Italy, we are likewise warning them of the consequences to which such an unreasonable policy might lead, as Serbia would thus lose the sympathies of France and England. It is dangerous not to take facts into consideration. *Therefore one cannot close one's eyes to the conviction that it will be necessary to create a coastal state of Albania.*[1] If the Serbians show more inclination to yield it will be easier, when the boundaries and the organisation of this Albanian State come to be determined, to insist on favourable terms and to obtain economic advantages for Serbia. The more overbearing the attitude of Serbia, the greater the danger of her becoming isolated. Please, speak quite openly to Pashitch and warn him of an expedition to Durazzo. *The Serbians should not place us in the predicament of being compelled to break with them, as they will do if we should be forced openly to acknowledge that they have gone too far in this affair.*

[1] Upon which Austria-Hungary and Italy insisted.

(464) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Oct. 28-Nov. 11, 1912. No. 2540.*

We have gained the impression that Austria is firmly resolved not to admit Serbia to the Adriatic Sea and that she has made sure of the support of her Allies. *In consideration of this solidarity among the Powers of the Triple Alliance, it is most important for us to know what the attitude of France and England would be if it should not be possible to prevent active proceedings on the part of Austria.*

I have tried to convince the Austrian Ambassador that such a step would be dangerous and inexpedient. I have asked Thurn to enquire of Vienna by telegraph whether it might be thought possible to let Serbia have a port on the Adriatic Sea *if this port were given a purely commercial character.* The Ambassador doubts that this will be possible and points, on the other hand, to his Government's readiness to agree to an absolutely equivalent securing of Serbian economic interests as well as to the railway transit to the Adriatic or to Saloniki.

I assume that it will become necessary in the near future to establish some sort of balance between the aspirations of Austria and the economic as well as political interests of Serbia. *It is of paramount importance that Albanian territory should be diminished as far as possible and that certain guarantees referring to the future organisation of that country be obtained.* These matters might form the subject of a preliminary exchange of views, but a final decision can only be reached by all the Powers in common, after all pertinent questions have been carefully considered. It therefore appears to us improper that Austria should now wish to settle the question of Serbian access to the Adriatic in a final manner.

(465) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Oct. 29-Nov. 11, 1912. No. 315.*

. . . . . I asked Grey whether he preferred this or that solution of the Serbian question? He replied, he considered the interests of Austria to be analogous to those of Serbia, and he thought that for Serbia as well as for Austria a railway under Serbian administration and control, leading to a port yet to be more precisely designated, might satisfy the legitimate demands of Serbia as well as the requirements of the general political situation.

(466) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Oct. 30-Nov. 12, 1912. No. 316.*

Paul Cambon read me, in strict confidence, two telegrams from Jules Cambon to Poincaré which referred to the wellknown interview of Kiderlen and the Serbian Chargé d'Affaires. One contains Kiderlen's version, the other that of the Serbian representative. I detect an important omission in the latter telegram. As I do not know whether Poincaré has communicated the contents of both telegrams to our Ambassador at Paris, I wish to make good the possible omission. *The Serbian Chargé d'Affaires asked whether Germany, in the event of a war between Russia and Austria on account of the pending Austrian-Serbian conflict would regard this as a "casus foederis," and when, thereupon, an answer in the affirmative had been given, he enquired if a "casus foederis" would also be established if France were not to take part in the war? Kiderlen replied that even in such a case Germany would take up arms.* [1]

(467) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 1-14, 1912. No. 319.*

Grey has given me the following information as to his interview with Count Mensdorff, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador. Acting on Berchtold's instructions, the latter had first declared that the Minister, like Sir Edward himself, would look upon military operations by Serbia in Albania as warlike measures the justification of which could not be disputed; he did not, however, share Sir Edward's view that an exchange of opinions between Austria and Serbia might have been avoided: in the first place, because Serbia had taken the initiative; and secondly, because Austria wished to prevent Serbia from securing for herself, by force of arms, a pawn, the possession of which was likely to influence the territorial boundaries of Albania. Grey read Mensdorff the telegram which he had sent to Belgrade and added that he knew that Russia had given equally plain counsel at Belgrade; he took cognizance with lively satisfaction of the Austrian standpoint regarding the Serbian operations, and he believed he might conclude therefrom that the Vienna Cabinet would refrain from making

[1] If the German secretary of foreign affairs really did make such a statement, none would have reason to envy the German public.

any threats. Mensdorff replied that was exactly his view.[1] Grey particularly emphasized to Mensdorff the danger and inexpediency of such a threat.

(468) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 1-14, 1912. *No.* 320.

Your telegram 2540 received.

Have communicated its contents to Grey. He adheres to his standpoint regarding the Serbian aspirations in Albania and the danger of an Austrian military action against Serbia. He touched upon these two points in his conversation with Mensdorff concerning which I reported in my telegram No. 319. In accordance with your wishes he counselled moderation at Belgrade. *When I drew Grey's attention to the solidarity of the Triple Alliance, and asked him if he could tell me anything about England's attitude in case our efforts to prevent an Austrian action were not successful, he replied, after some moments' reflection, that it was impossible for him to give a direct answer to a question referring to a possibility which, since his interview with Mensdorff, no longer appeared probable, and also because the attitude of England depended, above all, on the attitude of the remaining Powers. The attitude of solidarity gave us valuable indications in that respect but no positive facts.*

(469) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 1-14, 1912. *No.* 321.

To complete my telegram No. 320. Personal.

I have treated the question of the eventual attitude of England with a certain amount of discretion and, for various reasons, did not express myself explicitly. In the first place, because Cambon had already discussed this point with Grey. *Grey had told him that we had been assured of the diplomatic support of England, but that, for the present, a direct question as to the opening of hostilities would place him in a different position.* It is my belief that it will depend upon events how this question is going to be solved. Moreover, public opinion to-day is satisfied with the results obtained for the Slav Cause,[2] and does not think of war. Unfortunately, on top of

[1] Mensdorff's rôle would seem to be a peculiar one; in addition to being the familiar of Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador, he seems to have been too easily impressed by Grey.

[2] Surely not British public opinion.

this, comes the circumstance of a Ministerial crisis which, though probably postponed, has shaken the position of the Cabinet. In this connection Bonar Law again repeated at the beginning of yesterday's debate that he had perfect confidence in the foreign policy of the Cabinet and that this confidence would be retained in critical times as well.

Grey himself has spoken to me about the ministerial crisis and told me that it would not affect foreign policy. He added in strict confidence that in this respect he was in constant touch with Lansdowne. *It must be observed that Grey said nothing that could lead me to assume that England would refrain from interference.*

Under the present circumstances Grey's answer is all I could expect. The mentioning of the rôle of the other Powers connects Grey's answer with the statement which Nicolson made to Cambon and which I should not have mentioned otherwise, because Nicolson only expressed his personal opinion and has not the competence to answer such a question: *Nicolson told Cambon, with every reservation, that, if the Triple Alliance were fighting against the Entente, England would, he thought, take part in the war. I must add, however, that Nicolson's views do not always reflect Grey's views.* I believe Grey does not think the moment has arrived for submitting this question to the Cabinet.

(470) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Confidential Letter, Nov.* 1-14, 1912.

In consideration of the significance of the statements which were made to you by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, and which were contained in your letter of Oct. 25-Nov. 7, I quite agree with you that it is desirable that the new standpoint of the Government of the Republic of France with regard to an eventual expansion of Austria in the Balkans be fixed. I agree, therefore, that Poincaré's letter should be answered by us likewise in writing, and, as the letter of the French Minister was addressed to you, it would be best if our answer were also given through you. I enclose a draft for such a letter and I think I ought to add the following consideration.

All information at our disposal points to the fact that at least for the present Austria is not striving for any territorial acquisitions in

the Balkans. Notwithstanding, Austria might—entirely according to the way things will develop, and in consideration of the conflict with Serbia over the access to the Adriatic—resolve upon the annexation of Turkish or even of Serbian territory.

In both cases it would be most important for us to be sure that, in case of an intervention on our part, France will not remain indifferent. On the other hand, it must be taken into account that the situation in the Balkans is changing very quickly, and we are unable to foresee all chance happenings that might induce us to adopt this or that measure, *and I think it necessary, therefore, that in our negotiations with the foreign Cabinets we should avoid anything that might restrict our freedom of action in the future. In this respect it seems desirable to me that any declarations of too categorical a nature in your proposed written statement be avoided, such as are expressed, for instance, in the words of the French Minister "to oppose the territorial expansion of any Great Power in the Balkans." For that might also apply to Russia in the region of the Straits.*[1] *Naturally, I mention this last consideration exclusively for your private information.*

(471) *The Same to the Same. Draft of a Letter.*

I did not fail to submit the contents of your letter of Nov. 4th to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. M. Sazonoff authorises me to declare *that Russia like France could not regard indifferently a territorial aggrandizement of Austria in the Balkans.*[2] *He has much pleasure in taking note of the French Government's view that the interests of France would be affected by such an eventuality. In this respect, the Russian Government is prepared to come to an understanding with the Cabinets of Paris and London upon the mode of action which would become necessary in such a case.*

(472) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 3-16, 1912. *No.* 323.

As Grey confidentially informs me, the Italian Ambassador has declared that, if it was a question of a guarantee for Albania,

[1] Which was Sazonoff's *arrière pensée.*
[2] "Austria" substituted for "any Great Power," as proposed by Poincaré.

he thought that his Government would prefer a guarantee of all Powers to the guarantee of Austria and Italy alone.

(473) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 5-18, 1912. *No.* 324.

Nicolson read me a telegram from Buchanan which reports your last conversations with the representatives of Germany and Austria. He informed me of the purport of the answer which Grey thinks he will give Buchanan. Grey attaches the greatest importance to the settlement, in principle, of the Albanian question. Nicolson laid stress on that point because he thinks it will be impossible to influence Austria effectually unless, at the same time, reassuring declarations be made to her regarding the standpoint of the Powers, including Russia, in the Albanian question.

I replied you had already admitted the possibility of an autonomous Albanian coastal-State. Nicolson replied that a declaration to this effect must be made at Vienna, and he hoped you would not raise any objections to this. In view of your telegram No. 2540, I really believe that would be most desirable. The standpoint of "the Balkans for the Balkan Peoples" will surely also be applied to the Albanians.

The obduracy of the Serbians creates no good impression here. In view of the grave consequences which might attend the present situation, the most important, perhaps the crucial, point so far as England is concerned, is this: that apart from the utmost unanimity in the most important questions, everything be avoided that might be construed as a Serbian provocation, and that our support be given only upon this condition; in that way we should let the responsibility for an aggressive policy redound exclusively upon Austria. The tone adopted by Serbia and Montenegro is in itself producing the impression that the Austrian Government manifests calmness and even patience. I attach the greatest importance to this circumstance. This consideration will be further dealt with in my letter which you will receive by courier.[1]

[1] Documents 456 to 473 are given in this chapter, because in them is laid bare the extent of Sazonoff's program of reinforcing Serbia, thus early in the Balkan crisis, as against intractable Bulgaria. In order to please the Serbs, Sazonoff was willing to sacrifice Albania, and when he found that this would be difficult he thought of Albania as a coastal State.

VIII

SAZONOFF AND SERBIA'S PORT ON THE ADRIATIC

(November 1912)

(474) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 4-17, 1912. *No.* 369.

In the course of a conversation concerning the French reply to my communications referring to the Austro-Serbian conflict, *Poincaré explained to me that it would be impossible for him to say, even privately, which course French policy would adopt in case of active intervention on the part of Austria, before the Russian Government had communicated to him its own views on the subject. It is for Russia, he remarked to me, to take the initiative in a question in which she is interested above all others; whilst it will be France's task to give her full and active support.* If the French Government were to take the initiative itself, it would either run the risk of exceeding the intentions of its ally, or of not doing them justice. In order to avoid all possibility of doubt as to how far we should carry our support of Serbia, I thought it necessary to point out a passage from the instructions of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to our Minister at Belgrade in which it is said, that France and England had openly declared that they are by no means disposed to allow an accentuation of the conflict with the Triple Alliance.

All in all, Poincaré added, this means, that if Russia makes war, France will also make war, because we know that Germany will stand by Austria in this question. In answer to my query, whether he knew England's point of view in this matter, Poincaré said that, according to his information, the London Cabinet would for the moment confine itself to promising Russia its entire diplomatic support, but that this would not under certain conditions exclude more energetic assistance.

(475) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 5-18, 1912. *No.* 372.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, and in consideration of the great importance attaching to the question, I read my telegram 369 to Poincaré, who is completely in agreement with its text. *He merely asked me more precisely to develop his ideas regarding one point, namely that which concerns the conditions on which France would wage war.*

"It must be well understood," he said, "that France would go to war if the particular case of the casus foederis provided for in the alliance be fulfilled, that is, if Germany were to support Austria by force of arms against Russia." [1]

(476) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, Nov.* 7-20, 1912.

My telegrams of the last fortnight have informed you of my various interviews with Grey. I deem it necessary to-day to refer to your telegram 2540, in which I was instructed to ask Grey what the attitude of England would be if Austria proceeds to take military measures against Serbia.

As I have already telegraphed you, *Grey answered, that he could not give me a definite reply until he knew what the other powers were going to do. You will notice that the Foreign Secretary, without considering the precise form of my question, and without any preliminaries, has taken into consideration the last eventuality. I think I do not err in asserting that Grey, in speaking of the attitude of the other Powers, did not mean to say that he wanted to know what our programme would be. He assumed the standpoint of an actual conflict. It is therefore necessary to ascertain what would be the attitude of France, Germany and also of Italy.*

You will recall that, during the Bosnian Crisis, Grey had mentioned to me that the possibility of a German hegemony would be a menace to peace. Lately, that is during the negotiations between England and Germany, which had been the result of Lord Haldane's visit, these negotiations had been frustrated by the formula, that England, although she did not join or intended to join a combination of

[1] The documents show that Russia had reserved for herself "freedom of action" to the exclusion of Austria-Hungary, the neighbor state of the Balkans, and that France supported her ally in this.

Powers which had aggressive designs on Germany, desired to retain a free hand in case of an aggressive policy on the part of Germany. *I believe that the British Government will adhere to these two principles at present.*

Your Excellency has seen by my telegram that I have not insisted further upon this question. I believe it would have been useless. *He had told me enough to prove to us, that, under certain special conditions, England would enter the war. For this, in my opinion, two conditions are necessary: in the first place, the active intervention of France must make this war a general one; secondly, it is absolutely necessary that the responsibility for the aggression fall upon our opponents.*[1] I believe it is absolutely necessary that we keep this point well in mind. First of all, it involves the necessity of maintaining the principle of our own disinterestedness.

By means of this principle we obtain an influence which may possibly be a decisive one. Should we bring up questions, as, for instance, that of the Straits, or others in Asia Minor, where Russian interests alone are at stake, we should most certainly deprive ourselves of this influence. *Like Your Excellency, I am well aware of the vast importance which England's participation in case of war would have for us and if it is the question of a sacrifice on our part, I think that we must make this sacrifice. I repeat, judging by present public opinion in England, and consequently in the eyes of the British Government itself, the aggressor, according to the present feeling in the country, would be in the wrong. It will be necessary clearly to emphasize the aggressive character of Austrian and German policy.* This will be all the more easy for us if we are true to the standpoint which we have maintained since the beginning of the crisis. It is only necessary that we remain logical.

As to English public opinion, no change has taken place during this last fortnight. The part of the public that desires peace has been reassured with regard to the future of the Balkan peoples. Nobody in England doubts their being the victors. England's strong sympathy for these nations is gratified. This results in an optimism which is not altogether advantageous for us.

As the end mentioned has been attained, it will be difficult for public opinion in England to understand, that such causes, as for

[1] All of which took place in July, 1914.

instance, a Serbian harbour on the Adriatic or the size of Albanian territory, causes which are only of secondary consideration in its eyes, might step by step lead up to war.

The same with certain limitations might be said of the future of Constantinople. However this optimism and confidence bring about still another result. *Public opinion in England acknowledges the indisputable fact that Austria, on account of her geographical situation, has very important economic interests in the Balkans, and the right to defend these is conceded to her. Public opinion is not farseeing and does not trouble about hidden motives. Still, I believe, that in this, too, the question of who is to be the aggressor will be of the greatest significance.* Only under these circumstances would the British Government have the support of public opinion which the Government needs for energetic action. Grey and his ministerial colleagues are, no doubt, occupied with reflections of this kind. I see the echo of them in the answer which he has given to the question I put to him.

When the opportunity occurs I shall not fail to refer to this question again and send you as detailed an account as possible.

(477) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 7-20, 1912. *No.* 376.

I have communicated the contents to Poincaré, who thereupon entered into conversations with the Ambassadors of Italy, Germany and Austria on the same subject. Tittoni confirmed the plan submitted in telegrams 374 and 377 and supplemented it by insisting that Diakowo, Ipek and Prisren must remain part of Serbia. *Tittoni likewise told him that you were obliged to change your standpoint on account of the excited state of public opinion in Russia and that you must support the Serbian demand of access to the Adriatic. Tittoni is very much concerned about it, because Italy has pledged herself to adhere to the principle of Albania's integrity and in case of war on account of this question, Italy would be bound to give Austria armed assistance.*

Poincaré observed, that this would scarcely be in accordance with what he knew of the Russo-Italian agreement of Racconigi. It was utterly in contradiction to the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1902, *by virtue of which France had the right of counting upon Italian neutrality in case of war with Germany and Austria.*

Tittoni answered that the agreement with Austria, concerning Albania, had been drawn up previous to the understanding with Austria and Russia and would be absolutely binding for the Italian Government. This places Italy in a most difficult position, and she is therefore endeavouring, by every means in her power, to arrive at a peaceful solution of this predicament. *In the course of the conversation, Poincaré told Tittoni that Russia could absolutely rely on armed assistance from France, if the Austro-Serbian conflict should lead to a general war.* This, Poincaré declared, made a visible impression on Tittoni.

(478) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 383.

Poincaré has read me a telegram from Vienna, in which the French Ambassador reports, that the tension of public opinion at Vienna is extreme and that the Austrian Government has heard of your having changed your point of view during the last few days in regard to the Serbian claims and are now willing to support these claims. *Moreover, the Vienna Cabinet has learned, that we are making extensive military preparations on the Austrian frontier. Austria, on her part, is mobilising three army corps in Galicia and has finished her military measures against Serbia. The French Chargé d'Affaires added, that the German Ambassador is openly declaring that Germany will support Austria, and that, in case of war, Germany will only put small forces into the field against Russia and direct her main efforts against France, and that "Germany will overcome Russia only at Paris."*

On the other hand Poincaré expects that Ismail Kemal Pasha, who apparently had already arrived at Durazzo, would within a few days proclaim the independence of Albania and that he will be supported by the Austrian fleet. For that reason, the advance of the Serbian troops towards Durazzo threatens complications not only with the Albanians but also with the Austrians, which would lead to the Austrian invasion of Serbia.

All this alarms the French Government, and Poincaré asks whether you still uphold the point of view set forth in the instructions you gave to our Minister at Belgrade, or whether a change has really taken place in this respect? *Poincaré is convinced that Austria, as well as Italy, is firmly resolved not to allow the Serbians to get to*

Durazzo, and if you have actually decided to aid the Serbian advance on this harbour, this with all its consequences must lead to a conflict between Russia and Austria.

By way of answer I acquainted Poincaré with the contents of your telegram 2687, from which it appears that you are endeavouring to find a peaceful solution of this question and that there is no reason for the assumption, that we are trying to incite the Serbians to any dangerous actions. *Upon his remarking that it was alleged from several sides, that our Minister at Belgrade, Hartwig,*[1] *continued to incite the Serbians, I replied that, from my experiences in* 1908, *I was all too well aware how easily unjust charges were made against Russia and Russian diplomats. At the close, Poincaré declared with emphasis how extremely important it was that Serbia at the present critical moment should not invoke advice given her by Russia, and that it must be clear to all that if Serbia insists on her advance on Durazzo she does so at her own peril.*[2] *Poincaré requests me to inform you of the above.*

(479) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 330.

As Kiderlen has expressed the opinion, that it would be expedient for the Powers to state forthwith what questions they wish to bring up for discussion at the conclusion of peace, a misunderstanding has resulted from the version which Jules Cambon[3] transmitted to Paris and the steps taken here by Lichnowsky.[4] The number of points mentioned by Kiderlen are not the same, nor are their contents alike.

For this reason, and in order to accelerate the negotiations themselves, Poincaré has asked Grey whether it would not be useful to substitute the telegraphic exchange of opinion by a Conference of Ambassadors who would be authorized to settle the questions raised by Kiderlen. Grey has answered, that he would agree to this proposal and was agreeable to the choice of Paris.

[1] Notorious as Russian *agent provocateur* in Serbia and the Balkans generally.
[2] Poincaré surrendered to public opinion, the French press still holding that the claims of Serbia were unjustified and not a proper cause for going to war.
[3] French ambassador at Berlin.
[4] German ambassador at London.

According to Grey, the Powers would have to reserve to themselves the solution of the following questions:

1.) Albania,
2.) Serbia's access to the Adriatic,
3.) the Greek Isles.

Each of the Powers might mention the question in which it is especially interested.

(480) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 332.

Personal. Nicolson is rather sceptical as regards the reception of Poincaré's proposition, with reference to a Serbian harbour on the Adriatic, will receive in Germany and Austria. He believes that Austria is determined not to oppose Serbia's access to the Mediterranean, but that she would certainly resist any territorial acquisition. He believes that the expression of "neutral harbour" must be more clearly defined. He likewise believes that much will depend upon the meeting of the Archduke[1] and Emperor William. *Schemua's journey to Berlin has impressed him just as the news of a Russian Mobilisation, which is taken from the Vienna "Reichspost."* [2] *It is feared here, that the military measures taken by us are more extensive than those taken by Austria. It is admitted that this may be necessary. But this impression is regrettable, as I informed you in my last letter. Although, as I believe, England's attitude will depend chiefly upon Germany's course of action, yet Austria's policy in this crisis is not criticised as severely as it is with us. What is known of her present claim is compared with her plans before the war. The inference is to the credit of Austria. It is also thought that Serbia expects too much from the support of the Powers that have expressed their sympathy with this country.*

I am communicating this to you for your information.

(481) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 11-24, 1912. *No.* 333.

The observations which I have made these last few days prove, that Austria will make no territorial concessions in Albania in

[1] Francis Ferdinand of Austria, heir apparent.
[2] Rather vague. The sense probably is that Nicolson was impressed by both.

favour of Serbia. I believe, that the utmost that could be realized would be a neutral harbour on the territory of an autonomous Albania. *Whatever France's attitude, which is conditioned by our treaty of alliance, may be, I believe, that we should lose the moral support not only of England but also of France, if we were to grant Serbia more extensive assistance.*

If I am not mistaken it appears, that public opinion in Russia is ruled by the thought of achieving some revenge for 1909.[1] *I myself cherish this sentiment too much to permit myself to disapprove of such a feeling in Russia.* But it seems to me also that we have already achieved this revenge in an extensive measure—thanks to the Emperor's policy whose proper representative you are.

It is not the fear of a conflict with the Balkan Allies and their armies which at this moment restrains Austria. Only Russia, and the position she occupies, induced Austria to renounce her programme as it existed after 1909: i. e. any territorial expansion in the Sandjak and Saloniki. Austria has also been compelled at the same time to agree to the partition of the Balkans among the Balkan Allies and the creation of an Albanian State under the protectorate of all the Powers.[2] At least I am not aware that Austria has protested against such an idea. This in the main implies a complete change in Austrian policy. *Moreover, thanks to Russia's wise and disinterested policy, the whole question of the Balkan has found an unexpected solution without having brought about a European war.*

I believe, that some day, when public opinion in Russia will come to see things in this light, no single epoch of Russia's modern history will appear more glorious. Our wise and disinterested policy has won for us the support of France and England and as a beginning that of Italy as well. To endanger this result, and that because of a secondary consideration, concerning Serbia's ambition rather than her justified interest, would mean, to my mind, a departure from the way which we have hitherto so successfully followed.[3] And thus we should perhaps give our opponents a favourable opportunity for aggression, when, by a

[1] The annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

[2] Austria-Hungary and Italy risked war with the Entente in defense of Albanian autonomy. The former did not want to have the Balkan entirely slavisized, and Italy had plans in regard to Albania that were agreeable to her claims on the remainder of the Adriatic coast.

[3] Benckendorff did not mean what he said; Sazonoff had to be cajoled into being reasonable.

final demand on our part, the absolute necessity of which we cannot prove, the international situation should have changed to our disadvantage.

Please, excuse the candour of this telegram. That which I tell you is the result of observations which I am able to make here every day. Some day, I believe, public opinion in Russia will be congratulating itself on the result attained and these results have been obtained without war by the authority and the prestige of Russia

(482) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 12-25, 1912. *No.* 385.

The Austrian Ambassador here has informed Poincaré to-day, that the Vienna Cabinet cannot allow Serbia access to San Giovanni di Medua, even though this harbour may be neutralised.

He added, that Austria is willing to renounce all claims of special commercial privileges for herself and to concede to Serbia a railway line to a neutral harbour on Albanian territory with the right of importing arms and munition in time of peace through this harbour.

(483) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 12-25, 1912. *No.* 386.

I refer to my telegram 376.

In a conversation with me, Tittoni in some measure softened down the statements he made to Poincaré. He declared that Italy would be obliged to assist Austria only within the closely defined frontiers of Albania. Consequently, if Serbia insists on the seizure of a part of Albania, Italy will be obliged to act in conjunction with Austria and even to proceed to an occupation of Albania in common. In his opinion, this will not lead to any serious complications, as all the Powers admit that the Albanian question has general European and not Serbian importance.

I answered Tittoni that Serbia, in spite of Russia's pacifying influence, might perhaps provoke a conflict with Austria in the Albanian question. If Austria should answer this with an invasion of Serbia, a general war might follow, in the course of which,—as is evident from statements made by Poincaré—Italy would find herself in line with the armed opponents of Russia and France. Tittoni

replied that, according to his own personal opinion, Austria's military measures against Serbia, outside Albania, did not oblige Italy to support Austria; he would however confer with San Giuliano on the subject.

Tittoni says that Berchtold has given Italy the categoric assurance that he does not at present intend to make any claims whatever on Serbia, that Austria renounces all economic privileges for herself and agrees to a double railway connecting Serbia with Antivari and a neutral harbour on Albanian territory, but that Austria would oppose a territorial exit of Serbia to the Adriatic. Generally speaking, the impression I received from the interview with Tittoni was that a means of preventing an accentuation of the conflict would be a temporary joint occupation of Albania by Austria and Italy and that the final settling of the Albanian question might then be placed in the hands of Europe, as Italy is by no means desirous of entering upon a permanent condominium with Austria. I have communicated the contents of this interview to Poincaré who is greatly interested in this question.

(484) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 12-25, 1912. *No.* 388.

Personal. I am drawing your special attention to Tittoni's idea of a temporary Austro-Italian occupation of Albania. It seems to me that such a plan could be more fully developed and lead to a collective occupation of Albania by European States, in which we might follow Germany's example in the Cretan question and refrain from such an occupation whilst reserving to ourselves a participation in the settlement of the Albanian question. In this way, the Albanian question would at once be eliminated from the Austro-Serbian or Austro-Balkan conflict and it would be easier for Serbia to bow to a collective step of Europe than to the intervention of Austria alone.

(485) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1912. *No.* 390.

The French Ambassador telegraphs from Rome. San Giuliano thinks himself entitled to suppose that Austria will desist from all active measures against the Serbians should they occupy Durazzo.

(486) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1912. *No.* 342.

Although Grey has never asked me whether you have changed your point of view in regard to the Serbian demands, I know that the doubts felt at Paris have also found their way to him, even though Buchanan's telegrams proved the reverse. I have therefore deemed it necessary to acquaint Grey with your answer to Iswolsky. He merely replied that, in his opinion, all these misunderstandings have in the main arisen in consequence of the attitude, and especially the language, if not of Pashitch himself, then of the political leaders of Serbia and that this language must cause anxiety at Vienna.

(487) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1912. *No.* 345.

Grey has instructed Buchanan to communicate to you his opinion on Pashitch's utterance in the "Times" and to ask for your consent to the declarations he intends to make at Belgrade. Grey has been asked about this communication by Lichnowsky and Mensdorff and has confined himself to declaring this publication to be inopportune and regrettable, as the solution of this question depended upon the Powers. He added that he did not wish to conceal from me that this publication, in its form and contents, was fatal and so apt to give events a serious turn, that he deemed it necessary to give a clear explanation of his opinion at Belgrade.

Grey said nothing further, but evidently he hopes that you will not allow this incident to pass unnoticed.

(488) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov.* 14-27, 1912. *No.* 2738.

I have telegraphed Hartwig the following on November 7-20 sub No. 2659:

The Government is more and more disposed to a peaceful solution of the question of Serbian access to the Adriatic, as in our eyes, this question has only a local significance. Serbia's present attitude, however, precludes a peaceful issue. We are under the impression, that the Serbians cannot seriously count upon support on the part of the Balkan Allies, as their forces are exhausted by the war which has not come to an end.

Consequently your interview and the explanation by Pashitch are a challenge that will only harm the Serbians and will increase our difficulties in lending them further support in the general settlement of the war. Please dampen, in a cautious way, the ardour of Pashitch, and avoid interviews which may lead to unwarranted comments upon, and accusations against, your activity which, it is alleged, is not in accord with our general policy.

(489) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1912. *No.* 394.

Poincaré has read to me a very obscure telegram from the French Ambassador in St. Petersburg, concerning the question of the Straits. Georges Louis reports that you have lately changed your point of view and are no longer in agreement with the original principle of "neutralisation of the straits." *I told Poincaré that, so far as I knew, there never was any question of "neutralising the straits," and that the solution proposed by us in* 1908 *was of a very different nature. Poincaré stated to me that if we have the intention of raising this question, France will of course give us her most energetic support, only she begs us to apprise her in due time of our plans and intentions.*

(490) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, Nov.* 17-30, 1912. *No.* 2764.

The French Ambassador asked me, apparently under Poincaré's instructions, if we did not intend to submit also the question of the straits to the proposed preliminary conference at Paris.[1] **I replied that we do not wish to anticipate this question and that if necessary, we reserve it for discussion, all the more so as we are able to forego a strict enumeration of all questions which will be discussed at the preliminary conference. Our views as to the Straits are contained in a letter addressed to you which you will receive by the next courier.**

[1] This refers to the Ambassadorial Conference at London, called for the purpose of settling the claims and counter-claims arising from the Balkan War then still in progress. It is hard to understand why Poincaré should so promptly react to a suggestion made by Sazonoff, unless he was anxious to further bedevil the situation.

(491) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, Nov.* 15-28, 1912. *No.* 787.

In your letter of November 27th you touched upon the question, whether it would not seem opportune to establish an understanding with France as to the changes, which we would like to introduce into the "legal" and "de facto" status of the Straits, in connection with the present crisis in the Balkans. At the same time, the French Ambassador has inquired here what attitude we would assume in the face of possible demands by Bulgaria in this respect. Consequently I think it my duty to acquaint you, above all, with those considerations, which have lately guided our Foreign Office in this important question.

From the earliest beginnings of the crisis we have kept in mind that the war might result in a change in the status of the Straits. Yet, at the same time, we feared to raise this question too soon before the full success of the Balkan States, the possibility of the occupation of Constantinople by their troops, and the views of the other Great Powers, concerning events in the Balkan had clearly revealed themselves. This consideration has forced us to maintain a certain reserve as to the English proposal to discuss the question of an eventual internationalisation of Constantinople and of new guarantees as to the status of the Straits. *We believe that the vital interests of Russia in the Straits cannot be protected by any legal guarantees or stipulations, as these could always be circumvened; we always must rather consider the question: by what actual force is it "de facto" possible to protect a given status of the Straits from infringements?*

As a matter of course, we have shown still more reticence towards suggestions coming from Vienna, to establish a certain parallelism between our interests and those of Austria-Hungary: *Russia should declare herself uninterested concerning the western part of the Balkan Peninsula, while Austria would concede to us full freedom of action in Constantinople.* Assuming, on the one hand, that any change in the régime of the Straits could take shape only after the termination of the war, and that, on the other hand, we cannot enter into the question of compensations, as this would be harmful to the interests of the Balkan States, we have until now maintained a waiting attitude, without, of course, neglecting to seize the propitious moment to give clear expression to our desiderata.

Though the further development of the war cannot as yet be foreseen, we may yet take it for granted that the advance of the Allies has now already reached its culminating point and that the possibility of an occupation of Constantinople is very remote indeed. Therefore our first assumption remains, that Constantinople and a sufficiently large strip of land in Europe will remain in Turkish possession. It is to be supposed that Bulgaria, even after a victorious war, will require a considerable time to recuperate from her losses and to establish herself finally in the conquered territories. Turkey, weakened and vanquished, must face tasks no less difficult. *Russia, having abstained from participating in the war, is now, on the one hand, able to increase her influence over the Balkan States, including possibly also Roumania—on the other hand, to consolidate her position in Turkey for whom friendly relations with Russia are now more important than ever.*

All this induces us at the present moment to be particularly cautious when answering proposals which might be made to us by other Powers with regard to the Straits. *We must beware of agreeing to the establishment of any restrictive guarantees which might in future form a hindrance to a final solution in accordance with our interests.* On the other hand, we cannot miss the present favourable opportunity to introduce a few less radical but, nevertheless, important modifications of the actual régime. We think it best to deal with the Straits question as in 1908, i.e., to enable the border States of the Black Sea to have free passage for their men-of-war in times of peace under certain conditions which guarantee the safety of Constantinople. Naturally, there is at present no possibility of signing a onesided agreement between Russia and Turkey on this question; such an agreement would be in contradiction to our relations with the Balkan States. It would also hardly be necessary, for, instead of friendly assurances which remained at the time without result on account of the self-consciousness displayed by the Turks, we now possess more effective means for influencing Turkey, particularly at this moment, when part of the Turkish army has been transferred from our frontier to the theatre of war. *We must, naturally, pay the greatest attention to the attitude of the Great Powers, and we can state as a fact, that during recent years the ground has been well prepared for a solution in our favour.*

As you are aware, our wishes in this question cannot surprise any of the European Governments, and all of them have in their time expressed their conditional consent. In no way do we wish to adopt the theory of agreement or compensation, as far as Austria is concerned; but we have never denied, that Austrian economic and political interests in the Balkans have to be taken into account. We have, therefore, agreed to the principle of an autonomous Albanian state bordering on the sea.[1]

As to the question of a Serbian corridor to the Adriatic, we have advised the Belgrade Cabinet to consider the interests of its neighbour. We therefore consider ourselves entitled to expect the Vienna Cabinet to adopt a similar attitude as to our interests in the Straits. At all events, we believe that the opposition of Austrian diplomacy in this question would scarcely be able to form a grave obstacle to the fulfilment of our extremely moderate wishes.

Such are in general the considerations which guide us in the question of the Straits. In communicating them to you—in case you should speak to Poincaré on this subject, I deem it necessary to add that we do not think it advisable to come forward at present with any independent proposal, since the theory of compensations (as shown above) does not serve our interests. But should circumstances change and this question become part of the order of the day, then it would indeed interest us to learn the point of view of the French Government, in order that we might accurately determine the time and the means for attaining our end.

(492) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, Nov. 20-Dec. 2, 1912.*

It is with the greatest interest that I have read your letter to our Ambassador in Paris dated November 15-28, No. 787.

As the question of the Straits is treated exhaustively in this important document, I need on my part make no further comment. Your Excellency knows the present views of the London Cabinet. Without my having touched on this question, Grey has spoken with perfect frankness. Alluding to the negotiations of 1908, he told me that the London Cabinet has agreed to our intention to change the status of the Straits, *but with the limitation, that he, Grey,*

[1] Which to prevent, Sazonoff also was ready to go to war for.

did not consider the ground sufficiently prepared, nor believed the circumstances to be favourable. He has added that the situation had changed since then. He also gave me to understand, that this question is one of those which Russia could propose for discussion when the Balkan crisis comes to an end. Grey spoke in both cases of the plan which has been drawn up by yourself. You will remember that this plan is embodied in the memorandum transmitted to us by Grey at that time. These negotiations assumed, by the way, a previous understanding on our side with Turkey. I do not believe that this condition has changed. In fact the Turkish Empire, even though it issues from the present crisis ever so weakened as we may foresee today, has still not lost all its importance in the eyes of England. Freed from friction with its Christian subjects—the continual cause of all disturbances, difficulties and dangers—Turkey has become an exclusively Mohammedan and Asiatic Empire and represents a power of the greatest importance to England.

Howsoever that might be, we may count on the support of England, should the question of the Straits, in the natural course of events, be put on the programme. We have even been encouraged by England in this respect, for as I have said before, I have discussed this question with Grey and with Nicolson not on my own initiative. But naturally the British Minister judges things from his own point of view and not from that of Russia.

As to the latter, I entirely share your opinion, as expressed in your letter to M. Iswolsky. It is of course impossible to foresee how the Balkan crisis will end, but I am convinced even now, that at a moment, when all powers start to maintain the general balance of power—and, Austria excepted, no power thinks of raising any special question—we cannot insist on a solution of a direct Russian question. We would in that case lose a great deal of our moral influence and would, above all, pave the way for the compensation theory, which might become most dangerous for us, as for all Balkan States.

(493) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Confidential Letter, April* 18-*May* 1, 1913. *No.* 381.

In connection with the impending deliberations of the Financial Commission in Paris, I think it necessary to acquaint you with

certain considerations bearing upon definite questions of our policy.

. . . . .

So far as we can represent to ourselves the point of view of the British Government—which, by the way, has lately expressed the opinion that in a discussion by the Great Powers of their attitude towards Turkey, Russia has the first voice—Grey is of the opinion, that in future Turkish finances must be subjected to European control. This control would be extended not only to the sources of income, but also to the expediency of the expenses.[1] In this way it would be possible to obtain a restriction of Turkish armaments and to use an eventual surplus for the improvement of the Turkish administration.

This program is in many respects alluring, but it evades the answer to one question: If Turkish armaments are restricted, where is the guarantee for the effective protection of Constantinople and the Straits? As the frontier between Turkey and Bulgaria will be a very extended one, must not Turkey make the utmost efforts to defend her capital?

This question put by us, is likely to astonish those who suspect Russia of harbouring intentions of conquest. We certainly do not wish to anticipate the future, but we cannot fail to state that, if the ultimate defense of Constantinople and the Straits is not sufficiently assured, this fact, instead of serving our interests, constitutes merely a dangerous temptation for Bulgaria, and the question of the Straits, if raised too early, would place us in an extremely awkward position. If we have, consequently, on the one hand, no reason for preventing Turkey from taking the necessary measures against a possible attack on Constantinople and the Straits, we need, on the other hand, scarcely fear that Turkey would grow too powerful, as she has just now suffered an unexampled defeat. And as the problem of the Straits involves a whole series of other questions, the solution of which requires careful preparations, it would be dangerous and premature to contemplate now, before the completion of this preparatory work, the possibility of decreasing still further the defensive power of Turkey.

Apart from this, the connection which the British Government desires to establish between the economic revival of Turkey and

[1] Which would have made of the Ottoman empire another satrapy of the Entente, such as Persia already was.

her disarmament, contains a certain inner contradiction: should the first end be attained, and Turkey's financial situation improve, no pressure from without could prevent her from military armaments. This is our first objection against the establishment of a European financial control over Turkey. As to the technical question, how this control is to be carried into effect, we have equally quite a number of misgivings. Experience has shown that a joint administration, financial or political, cannot take the place of the Sovereign Power of the Straits itself. It is therefore to be apprehended that the proposed international control will either not fulfil its purpose, or lead to the hegemony of one of the powers, for instance to that of Germany. The new body proposed will be given not only financial, but also political functions, and will, therefore, reveal the same peculiar features as any conference of delegates representing the Great Powers. If it is often extremely difficult in practice to unite all Powers, on one common formula, *and if this can be achieved only by keeping the working of the formula as vague as possible,*[1] this observation applies all the more to the activity of the proposed controlling organ in which the most diverse and frequently contending interests of the different States would oppose each other.

On the other hand, we involuntarily hesitate to restrict Russia's freedom of action in Turkey by establishing a European control. Events are developing in a direction which might enable us to establish better relations with Turkey than we could maintain heretofore—without aiming at Utopian possibilities.

Turkey must clearly recognize that Constantinople and the Straits are gravely threatened in the future. This danger will weigh more heavily in the eyes of the Turks than their traditional distrusts of Russia; the interest of preventing the Straits from coming under the dominion of another power, an interest common in a certain degree to both of us, will bring Turkey closer to us. If this is the case, the Turks must realise that the best means of protecting themselves against Bulgaria lies in the influence which Russia exercises at Sofia. This does not in the least presume a hostile attitude of Russia towards Bulgaria. *The latter knows very well, that the Straits belong to Russia's incontestable sphere of interest*

[1] The general practice of diplomacy and the great breeder of war.

and that in this respect any weakness or hesitation on our side is utterly inadmissible.

(494) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 27-May 10, 1913. No. 341.*

Though I am personally convinced that Turkey is on the grade of a general decline, yet I must lay stress on the fact that Turkish politicians do not consider the situation of the empire so hopeless, as to permit any extensive international guardianship. They can also count in this respect on the support of several Great Powers.[1] The Entente Powers must keep this in view, in order not to come forward with proposals that would never receive general assent.

If I consider this question from the point of view of our own interests, I cannot refrain from recognizing the fact that the introduction of an international element into our relations with Turkey, which have been direct up to the present, could only hinder and delay our historical task to take possession of the Straits. In so far as Turkey is not a large market for the sale of our goods, we are not at all interested in her regeneration.

What would be most to our advantage would be this:—The establishment for the time being of sufficient order in Turkey to ensure the personal and material safety of the population, regardless of religion and nationality. *This would enable us to postpone the liquidation of Turkey until the moment, when our participation in this process of liquidation would afford us the greatest possible advantages.* As you remark in your letter 391, we may count on establishing better relations with Turkey than hitherto. *But in order to weaken the Turkish resistance against us, we must strive to eliminate from our relations with Turkey such bodies as would enable our rivals to point out that we are working deliberately against Turkey's own interests,[2] as for instance, it is being done in the questions of the increase of the Turkish customs duty.*

[1] Germany and Austria-Hungary.

[2] M. de Giers advised that Russia make no agreements with the Powers, so that she could play fast and loose until the Ottoman empire should be surrendered into her hands by circumstances—a general war, for instance.

IX

SERBIA AND THE LONDON AMBASSADORIAL CONFERENCE

(November—December 1912)

(495) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1912. *No.* 392.

Poincaré is of your opinion. The idea of a Conference has been suggested several times by Poincaré in London, Berlin and Vienna. Poincaré calls attention to his proposal of such a conference as early as October 15th. This proposal still holds good, so that a new initiative would prove unnecessary.

Inasmuch as Germany and Austria have declared, that they would attend a conference only if an understanding concerning the most important points of the programme had been arrived at,[1] Poincaré believes that the preliminary conference which you proposed, would be the only practical means of precluding a long delay—which is inevitable with telegraphic communications. On the other hand, Poincaré finds it difficult to take the initiative, since these deliberations will probably take place at Paris. Accordingly he asks whether you do not think it possible that the London Cabinet would take such an initiative, since Grey deems it expedient that the conference take place.

(496) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1912. *No.* 393.

In conversation with the French Ambassador, Kiderlen expressed his opinion to the effect, that only the Great Powers should participate in the Conference. Poincaré has instructed

[1] This was to prevent the springing of diplomatic traps of a brand-new make.

Cambon to remind Kiderlen, that in the proposal of October 15th the attendance of the Balkan States and Roumania was spoken of and that the French Government was still adhering to this standpoint. Poincaré believes, that your proposition simplifies the matter in as much as only the six Ambassadors of the Great Powers will attend the preliminary deliberations, while the Balkan States, under certain conditions, could take part in the final conference. The appointment of Ambassadors with special authorizations is under consideration in London, but this, according to Poincaré, would not be necessary.

(497) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 15-28, 1912. *No.* 347.

Grey would be prepared to take the initiative, but desires first to ask Kiderlen to ascertain Berchtold's opinion. He thinks it more prudent, as he is not sure of Austria's acceptance and because a refusal or even a conditional acceptance, on the part of Austria, would jeopardize the success of the conference. Grey will suggest Paris, though he believes that the Berlin Cabinet may possibly prefer a neutral capital, such as for instance The Hague. Grey adheres to the opinion that this conference will have to consider only questions connected with the liquidation of the Balkan war. He has already spoken to the Ambassadors of Italy and Germany. He has made an important observation to the latter; he told him, that if all the Powers were at present making serious efforts to preserve peace, *England and Germany were those countries which are least interested in Balkan questions and therefore most interested in the preservation of peace. If war should break out, the real cause would lie far deeper than the secondary causes which may provoke the war, so that he could see no serious guarantee that England and Germany would not both be drawn into the war.*

(498) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 15-28, 1912. *No.* 348.

Grey informs me of a telegram from Buchanan according to which you appear to be reverting to an alternative for Serbia's access to the Adriatic. Grey does not believe that Austria would accept the project of even a neutralised harbour if its territory were to be

Serbian. According to Grey, such a decision would jeopardize the success of the prospective conference. Grey considers it most desirable that this question be solved on the initiative of Russia in a form acceptable to Austria.

Grey is fully aware of how difficult this will be; on the other hand, he recalls in confidence the events of 1909, when the diplomatic support on the part of Russia and England could not obtain for Serbia any compensation for the annexation of Bosnia; *on the contrary to-day Russia's moral and diplomatic support has enabled Serbia to annex the Sandjak.* Grey infers from this, that Serbia has no right to claim more from Russia to-day than the support of safeguarding Serbian economic interests in the Adriatic under conditions acceptable to Austria. Grey has asked me to keep this conversation confidential. I asked Grey whether this consideration was meant to be a condition under which he would alone convene a conference. Grey answered that it was not a condition, but that he would consider such a solution of the question most desirable, as, in this way, the results of the conference might perhaps be determined beforehand.

(499) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 15-28, 1912. *No.* 349.

Paul Cambon has informed Grey, that Kiderlen explained to Jules Cambon, that it would be advisable for the Powers to state, without delay, the points which they desired to have discussed at the conclusion of peace. Kiderlen has mentioned the following points to Jules Cambon:

Albania, Constantinople,—Germany was not very much interested in this question—Adrianople, Mount Athos, compensations for Roumania, the Aegaean Isles.

At the same time Lichnowsky has taken a similar, if not wholly identical, step. With regard to Albania the German Government declares, that it does not regard military occupation on the part of Serbia as a definite political solution. Concerning Serbia's access to the Adriatic, Germany proposes a railway and a harbour, but not on Serbian territory; Constantinople, Adrianople and Mount Athos are mentioned only as another example and the Aegaean Isles are not mentioned at all.

Grey finds that these two steps do not coincide sufficiently and deducts from this, that telegraphic negotiations might cause misunderstandings. This reflection has urged him to accept Poincaré's proposal of convoking a conference at which every Power could mention the questions it is most interested in. With regard to himself, Grey proposes the three points mentioned in my telegram 330. In answer to my question, he declared that other points might be added to the programme as, for instance, the Turkish public debt.

(500) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 16-29, 1912. *No.* 351.

Nicolson told me last night, that the communication recently made by Grey to Lichnowsky has been repeated in a telegram to the British Ambassador at Berlin. *The conciliatory and friendly form in which Grey couched this communication does not alter the importance of the warning.*

I must add, however, that Grey's words did not convey to me the sense of a definite obligation towards ourselves. I believe that Grey, above all, intended to prevent the Berlin Cabinet from judging the situation as though it could count upon England's neutrality in any case. I had pointed out to Grey, how perilous such an assumption might prove on the part of Berlin. Grey acted upon my suggestion.

Although my faith has been considerably strengthened, nevertheless, I am convinced that the circumstances, which would accompany the beginning of hostilities, would exert a special influence on the final decision of the British Government. I deem it in every sense necessary that on the day Russia takes up arms, it would have to be entirely clear to public opinion, that Russia could not act otherwise and that she had made use of every possible means for the sake of peace—in all questions—also in the important question of Serbian access to the Adriatic.

(501) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov.* 17-30, 1912. *No.* 2762.

The British Ambassador here handed me a memorandum, in which the proposal is made in Grey's name, that in the course of the preliminary conference at Paris, Russia should take the initia-

tive and persuade Serbia and Montenegro to content themselves with the partition of the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar and not to insist on territorial acquisitions on the Adriatic. We pointed out to the Ambassador that such a procedure by Russia would meet with strong opposition on the part of public opinion in Russia and create an unfavourable situation for Serbia, because the concessions, which Austria had already been forced to make at the beginning of the war, would now assume the aspect of a new success on our part. After all, the year 1909 cannot be compared with present events, for general conditions, as well as the strength of the opposing interests and forces, are different from what they were formerly. *We are doing all we can to induce Serbia to be more yielding, but our exertions can only be crowned with success if the Serbians are convinced that we are doing all we can on our part to protect their interests by peaceful means and that our endeavours in this direction are supported by France and England.* During the prospective preliminary conference at Paris, we prefer not to take the initiative, but to propose amendments to the proposals made by the other Powers.

(502) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 18-*Dec.* 1, 1912. *No.* 355.

Your telegram No. 2762 received. Personal.

Your objections to Grey's proposal are entirely justified and I have already made use of them here. Grey will understand us. I beg you, however, to bear in mind, that Grey is above all thinking of the possibility of a war. *In this connection, I beg you to observe how extremely important it is, that the blame for obduracy in the most difficult question at the Conference should fall upon Austria alone. It will not be easy to accomplish this and yet everything may depend upon it.* At the critical moment, Grey will have public opinion on his side only if Russia has done all within her power to maintain peace in so far as her position permits. *Grey considers the possibility of a harbour on Serbian territory as out of the question.* He is averse to lending his support to this demand in a manner which would be unpopular in England. His attitude towards the solution of the question of a harbour on Albanian territory is, however, different: he is perfectly willing to give us his diplomatic support.

I do not deem it necessary to enumerate all the special points which we desire to lay before the Conference, as we are confining ourselves to the examination of the questions proposed by the other Powers. *Yet, I believe, that if our final decision in this most important question should be shrouded in mystery, an indistinct and undecided attitude on the part of the British and possibly also of the French representative, would result from this, whilst the representatives of the Triple Alliance would be united.* I am told here that it is feared, that you have altered your original opinion in this respect. Without rendering a service to the Serbian interests or helping to preserve peace, this might later on seriously imperil Russia's own interests. Grey's comparison of the present situation with the year 1909 is intended to be nothing but an argument which might be used at Belgrade, as well as for influencing public opinion in Russia and England. *Had Russia not adopted her present attitude, and manifested no sympathy with the Slav cause, the victory of the Allies would not have been possible. This, moreover, is perfectly true.*

It seems to me that it is not proved that Austria will consent to a conference if this question be not clearly defined. If an Austrian refusal should result from this, the consequences it would entail would be fatal for us. In any case, I deem it necessary to disclose at least to France and England our utmost concessions. I see no other means of influencing the attitude of these two Powers. In the contrary event, the Conference might prove to be a danger to our own interests, instead of being a remedy.

(503) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov. 21-Dec. 4, 1912. No. 2781.*

We are on principle not opposed to the choice of London, instead of Paris, for the prospective preliminary conference. We learn, however, that Grey is not in favour of the choice of London as he does not sufficiently command the French language.[1] On the other hand, we are afraid of hurting Poincaré's personal feelings, which might have an unfavourable influence on the degree of support that we are expecting from our Allies during the Conference. I request you to speak to Grey about it, and if you should

[1] The diplomatic manner of saying that Grey did not know that language.

notice that he personally prefers Paris, please ask him to insist upon the choice of Paris, as otherwise the holding of the preliminary discussions might be called into question.

(504) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 21-*Dec.* 4, 1912. *No.* 2791.

I refer to my telegram 2781. Personal.

The Austrians are evidently afraid of Iswolsky, and Kiderlen has no special confidence in Schön.[1] In our opinion, these considerations of a personal nature are discounted by the fact, that the initiative of the Representatives in the preliminary conference will be determined by precise instructions from their Governments.

(505) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 21-*Dec.* 4, 1912. *No.* 412.

Personal. During a conversation, Poincaré declared to me, that the wish of the Austrians, to hold the preliminary conference in London was not very complimentary to him personally. At the same time he gave me to understand, that he would not regret the choice of London, as the result of the conference would be at best "piece work." For my part, I must confess that the deep distrust and lack of good-will displayed towards me by Berlin and Vienna would, in case I should participate in the conference, prove to be an unpropitious factor. In London the colourless Mensdorff,[2] and Lichnowsky, who has not yet had time to create a position for himself, will not, of course, be able to cope with the influence of Benckendorff and Cambon. It seems to me that it would therefore not be particularly advantageous for us to insist upon the choice of Paris.

(506) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 22-*Dec.* 5, 1912. *No.* 365.

Your telegram 2781 received.

I shall not be able to speak to Grey until to-morrow. The London Cabinet has not received any kind of answer in regard

[1] German ambassador at Paris—but the German government kept him on post, nevertheless.

[2] A fine characterization.

to the Ambassadorial Conference. Kiderlen replied to Goschen [1] that he was in sympathy with the proposal and would ascertain the opinion of the Vienna Cabinet. Berchtold [2] said that he would examine the proposal and give his answer through the offices of Mensdorff. *The latter has expressed his personal view that Berchtold will formulate certain conditions.* Kiderlen and Berchtold have mentioned London as the seat of an eventual conference.

You are quite right in what you say as to Grey's attitude. He would be loath to accept London and would agree to this only, if no other way out could be found. Like yourself, he does not wish to offend Poincaré on any account; it is for this reason that he prefers Paris. He knows the difficulties; but will pay due attention to all your considerations.

(507) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 22-Dec. 4, 1912. No. 366.*

Your telegram 2791 received. Personal.

As I am told, Lichnowsky and Mensdorff are both opposing Paris most energetically and for the same reason, Tittoni must also be mentioned in this connection. The Italian Ambassador Imperiali [3] shares this point of view, but as I believe, for personal reasons.

(508) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 23-Dec. 6, 1912. No. 368.*

The Austrian Ambassador this morning gave Grey a verbal answer with regard to the Conference. It contains the Austrian Government's assent to the Ambassadorial Conference, designates London as the place of meeting and formulates a condition with regard to a Serbian harbour.

Since Mensdorff says that a similar step has been taken at St. Petersburg and Paris, I believe there is no necessity for me to enter further into this stipulation. *Grey would like to have your opinion as soon as possible. He replied to Mensdorff in general terms.*

[1] British ambassador at Berlin.
[2] Austro-Hungarian minister of foreign affairs.
[3] At London.

(509) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 23-Dec. 6, 1912. No. 369.*

Continuation of my telegram No. 368.

Nicolson told me in confidence that Grey replied to Mensdorff to the effect that it would in his opinion have been better if the question of a Serbian harbour on the Adriatic had formed the substance of the instructions to the Austrian representative at the Conference instead of figuring, as now, as a special condition on which Austria would be willing to participate in the conference.

(510) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov. 25-Dec. 8, 1912. No. 2829.*

The Austrian Ambassador has informed me of the consent of his Government to the Ambassadorial Conference in London, and added that the Austro-Italian Convention was to be made the point of departure in the Albanian question. I replied, that the secret Austro-Italian convention could have significance only to the two contracting Powers and could in no wise limit the absolute freedom of the other Powers. As to the Serbian harbour, the Ambassador has not made any restrictive conditions.

(511) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 26-Dec. 9, 1912. No. 2836.*

We consider it most desirable that the question of the Ambassadorial Conference should be settled as soon as possible. This would relieve the present situation which signifies a great danger to European peace. Therefore, if Grey should find it difficult to urge Austria and Germany to give up their standpoint, we on our part, do not consider it right to insist upon the choice of Paris. I have in this sense expressed my opinion to the French Ambassador, and added, that we deeply regret that the Conference is not to take place at Paris, but, that, on the other hand, I was convinced that Poincaré would be of our opinion and would see the necessity of the earliest possible meeting of the Conference. *In answer to the Ambassador's question, as to how I would explain the preference given to London, I replied, that I did not see Austria's resistance in this so much as an attempt on the part of Germany to draw closer to England in the hope of separating her from her friends, Russia and France.*

(512) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 26-Dec. 9, 1912. No. 2838.*

Assuming that the Ambassadorial Conference signifies a preparatory exchange of opinion by the Great Powers regarding the liquidation of the war, we consider that the Roumanian representatives should be permitted to attend only, as suggested by Berlin, if the matters brought up for discussion touch Roumania's interests directly. The representative of Roumania may, upon an unanimous vote of the Ambassadors, be summoned to make statements and to present his government's wishes, but he cannot be allowed to participate in the general Conference.

(513) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 26-Dec. 9, 1912. No. 2837.*

We consider it necessary without delay to enter upon an exchange of views with Paris and London concerning the questions to be discussed at the Ambassadorial Conference, in order to reach as complete an understanding as possible. The most important questions are Albania *and Serbia's access to the Adriatic.*

As you are aware, our main object is to guarantee the political and economic emancipation of Serbia. At the same time we are making efforts to deprive this question of the character of an Austro-Serbian, or even Austro-Russian conflict wrongly attributed to it.

In our opinion, the best way out of this difficulty would be to consult first of all as to the organisation of Albania; the frontiers of this state to be fixed later on. *In our opinion Albania ought to become an autonomous province under the sovereignty of the Sultan and the right should be conceded to Turkey to maintain there a certain number of troops.* You will receive further particulars by post. The general principle which we desire to see adopted lies in the neutralisation of Albania and her coasts in the sense that no other Power should have the right to create there any great influence for itself.

Serbia must have the right to a direct connection free of custom duties with the sea through Albania as well as by all railways which are to connect Serbia with the Albanian harbours. All the military requisites of Serbia must also enjoy this freedom. The connection of the Serbian railways with the Albanian harbours,

which can be established by an international syndicate, must vouchsafe a safe and undisturbed traffic through Albania.

We are of the opinion, that the negotiations regarding Albania's frontiers must be made dependent upon Austria's readiness to satisfy Serbia's justifiable interests. According to our opinion, the frontiers of this district would be formed in the North by a line from the Adriatic along the river Drina until its union with the white Drina; in the East from this point along the Drina until the Lake of Ochrida and further along the west shore of this lake directly south, a little further east than Onitza, whence the southern boundary would lead in a direct line towards Delvinjo to the sea.[1]

From the course of the negotiations, and in agreement with the representatives of France and England, *you will see whether it would not prove expedient to allow Austria to take the initiative in fixing the frontiers of Albania and to propose only our rectifications of the Austrian proposals. I request you to confer with Grey about this, so as to establish a common course of action.*

(514) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 27-Dec.* 10, 1912. *No.* 2845.

Identically to Paris. I am telegraphing to our Minister at Belgrade:

The Serbian Minister has informed me, in the name of his Government, that it is to be feared that, within a week's time, Austria will be taking decisive steps in order to force Serbia to give up all claim to an Adriatic harbour. The Belgrade Cabinet believes that Austria's military measures result from this. Austria also desires a pretext for intervention, so as to be able to push back the frontiers of Serbia's territorial acquisition as far to the East as possible and to incorporate Prisren into Albania. The Minister asserts, that Austria is contemplating Serbia's economic and political subjugation. The Serbian Ministers' statements, in conjunction with the undoubtedly serious general political situation, are causing us clearly to define the policy which we intend to adopt in the future.

All the Powers, including Austria, have agreed to examine in common the questions which result from the war. Our point of

[1] Which would have left a good third of Albanians out of *Albania.*

view in regard to the questions concerning Serbia is known at Belgrade. *We are prepared to support Serbia's political and economic emancipation, as well as her access to the Adriatic through Albanian territory,* whereby actual guarantees must be given her for the unimpeded transit of military and commercial goods. We are likewise prepared to insist on the Albanian frontiers being drawn up as far as possible to the West, but we are of opinion, that it is not possible to obtain for Serbia sovereign rights over part of the Adriatic coast. We have agreed to an interchange of opinions between the Ambassadors with the desire of giving Serbia every possible assistance to the above mentioned extent. *It is in Serbia's interest that we are not informing the Vienna Cabinet of our programme, but are merely declaring that the instructions given to our representative are conciliatory in spirit and give due consideration to Austria's interests.*

But we must be certain that Serbia will submit to a joint decision by Russia, France and England, for, if the opposite should prove the case, Serbia could not count on our assistance, as neither France nor England would support her in this question.

Neither we, nor the Powers friendly to us, concede that the decision with regard to a European war should rest with the Serbian Government.[1] We therefore believe, that the best means of preventing complications would be an early statement on the part of Serbia,—this statement could be made, for instance, to the British representative at Belgrade—that in the question of access to the Adriatic, Serbia would submit to the counsel and the decision of the Entente Powers. In this way Serbia would obviate the danger of an Austrian ultimatum.

(515) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 27-Dec. 10, 1912. No. 429.*

Your telegram 2838 received.

Poincaré is still of the opinion that there is no reason to permit the representative of Roumania to be present at the Ambassadorial Conference, even upon the conditions designated by you, since the representatives of the other Balkan States will not participate. The more so,

[1] Yet, indirectly, such was the case in 1914.

as, according to his information, Roumania will avail herself of this opportunity to support the Austrian standpoint in the Albanian question in the most energetic manner. You are aware that Grey has replied to Austria and Germany in this sense.

(516) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 27-Dec.* 10, 1912. *No.* 431.

Your telegram 2837 received.

In general, Poincaré agrees with you, but would like to call special attention to the following. In his opinion it would be disadvantageous to leave Albania under the direct sovereignty of the Sultan without control on the part of the Powers. Poincaré prefers either Albania's complete independence or the sovereign rights of the Sultan, as in Egypt. But he attaches special importance to a general European control, since otherwise Albania would inevitably come under Austria's influence. He agrees with your idea of the neutralisation of Albania and her coasts, but believes that it will be necessary to lay special emphasis upon the neutralisation of the railway lines between Serbia and the Albanian ports.

With regard to the Albanian boundaries, he wishes to see them limited as far as possible and believes that the line proposed by you coincides approximately with the frontier conceded by Italy. Poincaré will express his opinion more definitely, as soon as the details promised by you shall have come to hand.

(517) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 28-Dec.* 11, 1912. *No.* 384.

Your telegram 2837 received.

I have communicated its contents to Grey, and added that I am convinced that, on this basis, the three Entente Powers could not only mutually support one another, but that an understanding of all the Powers must be arrived at upon this basis.

Grey told me that he would be compelled to consult a map regarding the geographical frontiers of Albania; that, however, in any case, he finds our proposals "excellent." He told me, that if we could not come to an understanding with Austria on this basis, Austria must have changed the point of view she has hitherto held; your proposals took account of the Austrian conditions and even embodied in

part the wishes of Austria. As to the exclusion of the predominating influence of a single Power in Albania, Grey told me in confidence, that he had reason to assume that Italy shares this opinion. Grey, furthermore, told me he believes more than ever, that the organisation of Albania must first of all be discussed at the Ambassadorial Conference and once this problem, as well as the Serbian access to the Adriatic, shall have been solved, one might perhaps publish the result obtained. He believes that general relief would be achieved by this and that the other questions could then be quietly discussed.

(518) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 1912. No. 387.*

I hear from Cambon, that Grey has told Mensdorff and Imperiali, that he was opposed to the direct admission of the Roumanian representative to the Ambassadorial Conference. The general opinion is, that it would be impossible to grant Roumania such a favour without allowing Bulgaria to enjoy a similar advantage—something which would change the entire character of the Conference.

(519) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec. 1-14, 1912. No. 393.*

Grey accepts your proposal with regard to Roumania, but is of the opinion that the Ambassadors would have to concern themselves with this question only if a direct understanding between Roumania and Bulgaria [1] proves to be impossible. *Grey has informed the Cabinets that he has changed his original point of view.*

[1] Following Bulgaria's refusal to cede to Rumania a part of the Dobrudja, as compensation for Rumania's desertion of her ally, Turkey, during the Balkan war, Rumanian troops invaded Bulgaria and advanced to within a short distance of its capital, Sofia.

X

RECENT PHASES OF RUSSIAN POLICY IN THE BALKAN.

(January—July 1914)

(520) *Poklewski-Koziel, Russian Minister at Bucharest to Sazonoff. Secret Report, Jan.* 11-24, 1914.

Having come into contact with the most prominent political leaders of Roumania, I should like to sum up my first impressions in this letter and draw certain conclusions, although I must in advance apologise for a certain hastiness arising from the circumstance that I have been here only a short time.

As Your Excellency is aware, I have received an exceedingly warm welcome in Governmental circles here, and, again and again, sentiments of genuine friendship for Russia have been expressed to me.[1] I found the same welcome in society here. I have spoken to former Ministers, Senators, Deputies and various leaders of the Roumanian army; when the absence of responsibility of these persons made it possible for them to give still more unmistakable utterance to their thoughts and feelings.

To my mind, all this corroborates the fact already pointed out by my predecessor, and also emphasized by my French and English colleagues, that an important or perhaps even a decisive change in public opinion has been brought about here in favour of Russia. *Besides one must bear in mind, that the events of last year which have inspired the Roumanians and above all their military leaders with confidence, in their own strength, have at the same time also encouraged the efforts of the Irredentists.* These are not so much directed against

[1] Rumania's friendship was due to Sazonoff having handed over to her, by the Peace of Bucharest, July 28, 1913, a part of the Dobrudja, peopled, almost exclusively, by Bulgarians.

Russia as against Transsylvania[1] with its three million Roumanians. This latter circumstance naturally also tends to enhance Roumania's sympathy for Russia. When one considers that Roumania has long been looked upon as a member of the Triple Alliance, the statements made by the Ministers here, that Roumania enjoys perfect freedom of action in her foreign policy, and that she will in the future pursue only Roumanian interests have a decidedly favourable significance for us.

The question, however, arises, are such statements sincere and is Roumania really not bound to Austria by any agreement whatever?[2] It seems to me that in answering this question the following points of view must be kept in mind.

1.) The old and most cordial friendship existing between the Austrian Monarch and King Carol.

2.) The strong influence exercised by Germany upon the King and the Roumanian Government.

This Great Power is looked upon by many people as a disinterested friend of Roumania's. It is appealed to for advice at critical moments and it always sends hither all necessary information and advice. It is known for instance, that Kiderlen, up to his death maintained a private correspondence with King Carol, who was informed by him, as early as April 1912, of the conclusion of the Alliance between Bulgaria and Serbia. One need not doubt that an influence of this kind is exerted by Germany upon the Roumanian Government and this influence is certainly being used to keep Roumania in the path of Austrian policy.

3.) Although the Roumanian Government has always denied the existence of an Alliance with Austria, it is scarcely to be doubted that such an Alliance was actually concluded at the time and this is conceded here by many people. If that be so, one asks oneself at what moment did this Alliance cease to exist? It is extremely difficult to answer this question, because one cannot point out any period at which a mutual estrangement between the

[1] The minister had in mind Austria-Hungary, of course—Transsylvania being a part of Hungary. The Rumanian irredentists were divided in two camps: Bratianu-Jonescu, Transsylvania; Marghiloman-Carp, Bessarabia.

[2] Such a treaty existed and it is remarkable that the Russian minister finds it necessary to speculate upon this point since most persons familiar with international affairs at all knew of its existence.

two countries is noticeable—something which doubtless would have been the result of the termination of the Alliance.

4.) I have been told by several Members of the Government here, that Roumania is obliged to maintain friendly relations with Austria, since the fate of the Roumanians in Transsylvania depends on Austria-Hungary. On the other hand, we see that Count Czernin has been appointed Austrian Minister at Bucharest. He is not a diplomat, but a confidant of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who, on the occasion of his last visit to Roumania, spoke with the local representatives of the Transsylvanian Roumanians and, inquiring as to their wishes, openly criticised the Hungarian Government on account of its present policy regarding the Roumanians. Some years ago, Count Czernin himself compiled a pamphlet in which he advocated the rights of the nationalities oppressed by Hungary. In an interview in a newspaper the other day, he expressed the hopes that the Hungarian Government would make concessions to the Roumanians.

When one considers that the Austrian and Hungarian newspapers are singing the praises of King Carol and of Majorescu and evince sympathy with Bratianu, the new Prime Minister, one could scarcely speak of an estrangement between the two countries. In my opinion, it would therefore be more correct to assume that Austria is doing her utmost to keep Roumania from giving notice of cancellation of the treaty of alliance which on the part of the Roumanian Government would mean nothing less than the confirmation of the complete change in public opinion. [1]

All the foregoing, in conjunction with certain personal impressions and observations, leads me to conclude that in the meanwhile the Roumanian Government will not, or cannot, give notice of the treaty of alliance with Austria and that the alliance is therefore still in force.

I have communicated this personal view of mine to a Roumanian with whom I have been on friendly terms for years. This personality has long occupied a leading position in the Roumanian diplomatic service and has always been a sincere friend of Russia. On

[1] The treaty had not yet expired. There was no need to merely "conclude" this. It was a known fact. If Poklewski-Koziel had read the Austro-Hungarian newspapers during the crisis of 1912-13 he would have known this.

my arrival at Bucharest he was able to give me many useful hints and to facilitate my first steps considerably.

The personality in question has informed me . . . . . this treaty was concluded for a period of 10 years by the late Bratianu; it was renewed for a similar period, but during one of the Carp ministries, the mention of a time limit was omitted and the provision was added that the treaty would expire a year after the official notice had been given by one of the two parties.[1] . . . . .

(521) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Bucharest to Sazonoff. Confidential Report. Feb.* 4-17, 1914. *No.* 9.

As I had the honour of informing Your Excellency, in my confidential telegram No. 24, the Roumanian Prime Minister, Bratianu, has asked the Turkish Minister here to inform his Government, that in case of any warlike action on the part of Turkey against Greece,—which for the time being could only take place by land, i.e., with active or passive assistance of Bulgaria,—Roumania could not remain an indifferent spectator, but would be forced to regard such a step as a violation of the peace treaty of Bucharest[2] and in order to protect its inviolability she would not shrink from adopting extreme measures.

In this way the Roumanian Government, after having long been undecided, has now, under the steady influence of Greece and Serbia, in an impressive manner clearly defined its attitude in a possible conflict between Greece and Turkey. This will doubtless have a sobering effect upon Turkey and at any rate avert the danger of new convulsions in the Balkan.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, whilst communicating the above mentioned step of Roumania, remarked to me that the Bucharest Cabinet has decided upon this because of a complete lack of confidence in the sincerity of the peaceful protestations of Bulgaria. To judge by the feeling prevailing there, she would scarcely miss the favourable opportunity of a Turkish attack upon Greece to realize her longing for revenge in one way or another.

[1] A very floundering letter, written by a man who wanted to be wise and cautious at the same time and had little to do it with. Poklewski-Koziel was at one time chargé d'affaires at London, and minister at Teheran during the crisis.

[2] Of 1913, at the making of which Austria-Hungary waged war against Pan-Slavism and the Entente single-handedly, Germany being on Russia's side.

"In a duel fought between Greece, with whom we have no alliance, and Turkey, who has not signed the Peace Treaty of Bucharest," continued Parumbaro, "we can remain inactive if it should be fought at sea. But at present, as Turkey has not yet received the ships ordered in England for her navy, war can only be waged on land, i.e., on the condition that the Turkish army advance through Bulgarian territory. If we were convinced that Bulgaria would oppose her forces to the advance of the Turkish Army, we need in no wise interfere in this question but we have not this conviction. On the contrary, we have every reason to believe that Bulgaria will also mobilise her army in case of the invasion of Greek territory by Turkish troops[1]—not to ward off the Turkish attack, but, on the contrary, to go over to the Turkish side, which would result in the disturbance of the balance of power in the Balkans, which was established by the Conference of Bucharest under such great difficulties. The provisions of this conference are founded on our general policy. A departure from it would be incompatible with our point of view and we hope that the warning given to the Turkish Government will have the desired effect."

(522) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Report, Feb.* 11-24, 1914. *No.* 7.

During the stay of Venizelos [2] and Pashitch [3] at Bucharest, news was spread in the Balkan press, and in European newspapers, of Roumania having joined the Serbian-Greek-Montenegrin Alliance. As Pashitch quite frankly informed me, this news is wholly incorrect. Neither a formal alliance, nor any kind of written agreement, has been signed at Bucharest. On the other hand, the statements made by the Roumanian statesmen, as well as by the representatives of Greece and Serbia, have clearly demonstrated the serious inclination to conclude an agreement. Roumania is firmly resolved to maintain the provisions of the peace treaty of Bucharest of July 28, 1913, and under no circumstances will she allow any alteration to be made; likewise is she determined to reject every attempt

[1] Possible only at that time through Bulgarian territory, so that the Bulgarian army would already be mobilized either for or against the Turks. A fine instance of diplomatic beating about the bush.

[2] Minister of foreign affairs of Greece.

[3] Minister of foreign affairs and premier of Serbia.

to change the *status quo*. This intention is supported by all the political leaders and the present Bratianu Cabinet.

According to the words of the Serbian Prime Minister no one at Bucharest has so clear a conception of the political situation of the Balkans as King Carol himself. During an audience granted to Pashitch, he condemned the senseless conduct of Turkey and Bulgaria and closed with the exclamation:

"Who could still believe that Roumania may be compelled to intercede in order that Turkey should retain possession of certain Aegaean Islands?"

This exclamation of the venerable King made a deep impression upon Pashitch who inferred from this, that in case of urgent need, the King would set his army in motion to protect Greek interests.

Without doubt, such an utterance, made by the King, is a proof of the fact that an important change has taken place in the political views of the Monarch, as up to now, he has always followed the instructions from Berlin and Vienna.[1] . . . . .

(523) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Sofia. Confidential Letter, Feb. 17-March 2, 1914. No. 129.*

The letters and reports received from you, since your arrival at Sofia, depict the difficult conditions prevailing in Bulgaria since the last war, and which she has not yet succeeded in overcoming. His skilfulness enables King Ferdinand to veer around between the numerous difficult complications of the domestic situation and his wish to improve his relations with Russia as much as possible, without compromising himself in his relations with Austria on whose sympathy his Government is at present dependent.

Considering the complicated political situation, the Russian representative can essentially adopt only a waiting attitude. This, of course, does not prevent a friendly exchange of views with the King or leading personalities. But these conversations cannot inspire us with much confidence, as you rightly observed in your letter of February 5. They give us no guarantee for the future, for

[1] In order to prevent the reader being seized by vertigo, it must be stated that Rumania had an alliance with Turkey—a potential scrap of paper. Bulgaria, having been well trimmed at the Bucharest Peace Treaty of 1913, by Sazonoff, Rumania, Serbia and Greece, deemed it prudent now to range herself on the side of the Turks in the dispute arising from the continued occupation by Greece of islands in the Aegaean Sea.

even Daneff himself, although the watchword "Russophile" had been given, was not prevented at that time from playing with Austria instead of siding with us. I may consequently call your attention to the circumstance that the present Cabinet does not enjoy our confidence. The more so as the reputation of the personalities who compose it, is very dubious.

The coming election will perhaps bring a majority for the Radoslavoff Cabinet. What attitude would you adopt in this case? Perhaps we could support Bulgaria in certain concrete cases if a guarantee is given us that Bulgaria is acting independently of the members of the present or possible future Cabinets. But it is difficult to effect a rapprochement between Russia and Bulgaria and between Bulgaria and Serbia through the good offices of Russia unless a complete change in public opinion and a change of the Government takes place. For as long as the present Ministers are in power, it is advisable for us to observe reserve and extreme caution.[1] . . . . .

If the present Cabinet should be replaced by a Coalition Ministry, with Malinoff at its head, we should welcome such an event, in the consciousness of being able to save Bulgaria from ruin. *A ministerial change of this kind would lead to active support on our part. For instance, it would render it possible for us to accelerate the final settlement of the Bulgarian Loan at Paris and to prepare the way for a rapprochement between Bulgaria and Serbia.* [2] But even then, we shall observe extreme caution and only advance by degrees, for, otherwise, we should incur the danger of shaking Serbia's confidence in ourselves and of alienating Roumania from us, if, at the same time we should not succeed in binding Bulgaria to us by the closest ties.

(524) *The Russian Ambassador at Vienna to Sazonoff. Letter, March 21-April 3,* 1914.

However deplorable the Second Balkan War [3] has been from the point of view of the Slavs, one cannot deny that the result of this

[1] Bulgaria's attitude was the result of Sazonoff having handed to Rumania a large slice of the Dobrudja—a territory as Bulgarian as Maine is American.

[2] Serbia and Bulgaria had dissolved their alliance and gone to war against each other.

[3] Between Bulgaria and Serbia and Rumania, due to the fact that Serbia and Russia prevented Bulgaria's annexation of Macedonia, though the Macedonians wanted to join the Bulgars. Rumania seized this opportunity of pressing her own claims.

war, so far as it is a question of special Russian interest, has been advantageous to us. *Indeed what would have happened if wisdom had prevailed at Sofia at the conclusion of the armistice with Turkey, and if the Bulgarian Government had been willing to accept the justifiable demands of Serbia as to the alteration of the agreement existing between them, and the entirely unjustifiable, but relatively modest, demands of Roumania? So far as the expansion of her territory and strength of her population are concerned, Bulgaria would have become the greatest of the Balkan States; Roumania would have hastened to approach her, probably Turkey too, and if finally even a rapprochement with Austria had been brought about—which I have always thought possible even before the war with Serbia—a block hostile to us would have been formed in the Balkans, consisting of Austria, Bulgaria, Roumania and Turkey.*[1]

Now, however, under existing political conditions, Austria is entirely isolated in the Balkans and every attempt on her part to alter the status quo would meet with decided resistance on the part of the League—Roumania, Serbia and Greece.

For this reason, everything must be avoided that could set Roumania at variance with Serbia and Greece, an end which Austrian diplomacy will probably try to attain. In this respect, Austria possesses an efficacious means in Albania. It must be understood at Belgrade and Athens that every imprudence on their part can only be of service to Austria, as it would evoke Roumania's dissatisfaction, whilst Austria and Italy, left to themselves in Albania, would ultimately quarrel.

This situation, and the knowledge that the Vienna Cabinet has committed an error in supporting Bulgaria during the last crisis, are calling forth in Austria and Hungary that vague general apprehension which has become apparent of late.

In conclusion, I should like to express my regret, that our newspapers, and especially the French ones, are so noisily expressing their satisfaction as to the new course of Roumanian policy. To do this is quite futile, because the only significant fact for us is that we have disengaged Roumania from the coalition opposed to us, and not the diplomatic success obtained. This noise, however, excites our enemies and

[1] The very thing which the Sazonovian Peace of Bucharest prevented to the great detriment of Bulgaria.

induces them to do their utmost to retrieve what they lost. In Roumania, this circumstance will be used by the elements hostile to us,[1] *so as to represent matters as if the Entente Powers wished to compromise Roumania and cut off her retreat.*

(525) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Cettinje to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 13-26, 1914. *No.* 17.

King Nicolas, after having hesitated for long, gave orders these days to deliver to King Peter his autograph letter which had been sent to Belgrade some time ago. In this letter, Serbia is invited to conclude without delay, an arrangement with Montenegro, concerning the union of the two nations in the military, diplomatic and financial field, with "a reservation as to the independence and individuality of both States and their dynasties." [2] *At the close of the letter, King Nicolas emphasizes how very useful such an arrangement would be to the unliberated Serbians and that it will be true to the spirit of Russia, the eternal protectress of the Slavs.*

(526) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 13-26, 1914. *No.* 18.

Continuation of my telegram No. 17.

As we know the actual frame of mind of the King of Montenegro, and, on the other hand, must take into consideration in this question the standpoint of Italy and Austria, the latter of whom is openly apprehensive and hostile to the amalgamation of the two Serbian States, I am of the opinion that the treaty of union of the two sister nations can have prospect of success only if the conditions mentioned by the King of Montenegro are taken into consideration, i.e., if the independence of Montenegro is guaranteed. *The best means of promoting the peaceful development of the Serbian and Montenegrin amalgamation is, in my opinion, the resumption of the activity of our military instructors in Montenegro within the compass of the Serbian military programme.* At the same time, Serbian instructors cannot be given permission to exercise this activity in Montenegro, since such a measure would lead to a premature agitation directed towards amalgamation which in its turn, might lead to

[1] The Carp-Marghiloman coalition.
[2] A new Russian move to get a Serbo-Russian port on the Adriatic Sea.

dangerous complications—even to the occupation of the Sandjak by Austria and an armed conflict between Serbia and Austria.

(527) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, March* 16-29, 1914. *No.* 602.

I refer to the telegrams from Cettinje Nos. 17 and 18.

Serbia's attempt to send military instructors to Montenegro appears for the moment to meet with political difficulties. I request you to inform Pashitch of this in confidence.[1]

(528) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 17-30, 1914. *No.* 104.

Your telegram No. 602 received.

According to the opinion of Miushkovitch,[2] there is no question of sending Serbian military instructors to Montenegro, and Pashitch considers this plan to be impracticable under present conditions. He is of the opinion that if such ideas have been mooted at Cettinje they exclusively serve the purpose of expediting, as much as possible, the sending of Russian instructors in combination with the granting of further subsidies.[3]

(529) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 17-30, 1914. *No.* 104.*

I refer to the telegrams from Cettinje Nos. 17 and 18.

The letter in question, from the King of Montenegro, was read to me by Pashitch who called on me the other day, accompanied by Miushkovitch. From the clear and sincere words of the former, I perceive that the offer of the King of Montenegro has long been expected and is looked upon as another step towards the hearty reconciliation and rapprochement of the two States; it does not, however, mean an amalgamation which under the present circumstances is not even thought of here.

The preservation of the dynasty and the complete independence of the state is the basic condition. *The agreement must bear a cultural character* and refer to finance, trade, customs, traffic, diplomatic

[1] A case of prompt reaction.
[2] Montenegrin chargé d'affaires at Belgrade.
[3] From Russia.
* Repetition of No. 104 probably due to error.

and partly also to the military institutions, proceeding solely from the thought of mutual protection. The question of the instructors will not be touched upon.

The long experience of Pashitch in statesmanship, as well as his prudence, are a warrant [1] to Your Excellency that no uncautious step will be taken and that the proposed agreement, of which we have had timely information, will not lead to the complications apprehended by our Chargé d'Affaires at Cettinje. The proposed reply to King Nicolas will be couched in a friendly spirit. I am waiting for the departure of our courier in order to remit to you a copy of these two documents and a detailed report.

(530) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Confidential Letter, Feb. 20-March 5, 1914. No. 130.*

I consider it necessary to inform you of the substance of a conversation which I had of late with Count Czapari the new Austro-Hungarian Ambassador.[2]

The conversation concerned the consequences that might result from a disturbance of European peace. After observing that his Government had not intended him to enter upon this exchange of opinions, Czapari mentioned that the noticeable tendency for a mutual rapprochement or union of Montenegro and Serbia, was causing the greatest perturbation everywhere.

"If such a union should take place, Austria could not remain a passive spectator. The interests of the monarchy in the Adriatic do not allow of any displacement of the balance of power. The Adriatic has the same significance to Austria-Hungary as the Black Sea to Russia." [3]

I replied to my visitor that the events depicted by him would hardly materialize in the near future. Whilst the old King still lives, nobody will seriously think of his ever abdicating the throne. As far as Russia is concerned, *I remarked, we can scarcely be suspected of being in favour of a restriction of the monarchical principle in*

[1] A most remarkable statement in the light of these documents.
[2] At St. Petersburg.
[3] Meaning that the amalgamation of Montenegro and Serbia would have given Serbia a port on the Adriatic and Russia a naval base in the Mediterranean.

Montenegro. In spite of this, we do not lose sight of the possibility that, after the death of King Nicolas, his successor will scarcely enjoy the same esteem in his country as did his father. *But, as we do not wish to interfere in the internal affairs of Montenegro, we are not in a position to favour one or the other of these endeavours, although it would appear that this idea is spreading in Austria and Hungary.* It is difficult to influence an excited people, if one is not sure of success.

On the other hand, I cannot see why it is so positively assumed that a union of Montenegro and Serbia would involve the interests of Austria and Hungary. One cannot foresee the future, but one can discuss what might happen under certain conditions. For example, even some years ago, it was considered an axiom of the Austrian Monarchy, that Austria could not renounce the Sandjak. Aehrenthal, nevertheless, did this, after other occurences on the neighbouring frontiers had brought about a change in favour of Serbia and Montenegro. Has the Monarchy suffered any kind of disadvantage through this?

The reference to Austria's and Russia's interests in the Adriatic and the Black Sea is not convincing to me. Up to the present the general opinion has prevailed that there could only be a Russian and a Turkish Naval Power in the Black Sea; to-day we see that the Border-States, Roumania and Bulgaria, are also striving for the possession of a navy of their own. And what happens? Russia in no wise opposes these efforts *and regards them as not at all disadvantageous to her own interests.* Ought Austria to be disquieted in any way to behold Serbian, instead of Montenegrin, harbours in the Adriatic in the future? All these reflections, I concluded, are a proof that future events cannot be foreseen but that in one way or another we must reconcile ourselves to a given situation.

With this our conversation was ended. I am unable to judge whether the assertion of the Ambassador that he was speaking on his own initiative was correct or not. But I believe I am right in assuming that the alarm mentioned by Czapari actually prevails in Austria.

I am communicating the above for your personal information only. Should you discuss this question with Pashitch I should like you to emphasize the confidential nature of my conversation

with the Ambassador and to advise him to be extremely cautious in this question which is of such importance to Serbia.

(531) *The Russian Minister at Belgrade to Sazonoff. Report, March 25-April 7*, 1914. *No.* 18.

I make free to thank you for communicating to me your conversation with the new Austro-Hungarian Ambassador as referring to the union between Serbia and Montenegro. I have availed myself of the first opportunity of communicating your standpoint in this question to Pashitch, whereby I satisfied myself that he fully realizes the danger of an artificial acceleration of a normal development and that he is entirely conscious of the necessity of exercising the utmost caution.....

I will add the following for your information. Lately I had a similar conversation with the Austrian representative here as to the possibility of an amalgamation of Montenegro with Serbia. I remarked, that for the moment I saw no such signs, and that Giesl, who had been in Cettinje for so many years, must be well aware of the feeling of distrust which the King of Montenegro harbours against Serbia and that, therefore, cordial relations between the two countries seem to be out of the question.[1]

Giesl replied, that this was indeed so, but that it was not a question of the King, since he was old and seriously ill; *his sons were not popular with the people and would probably be content to go abroad if paid a sufficient compensation.* The psychological moment would then have arrived and the question of a union of Montenegro and Serbia would then be raised of its own accord. Giesl added, that he had not been instructed by his Government to mention this, but that he had merely expressed his personal opinion to me. The perfect analogy between the explanations of the two Austrian representatives is so clear that one may no doubt rightly assume that they have acted in the name of their Government.

(532) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Report, May* 6-19, 1914. *No.* 26.

After the Monarchs of Serbia and Montenegro had exchanged touching autograph letters, the question of the union of the two

[1] Austria-Hungary banked on this feeling of distrust in regard to the seaport on the Adriatic.

related countries appeared to have sunk entirely into oblivion. As he had been without any news from Cettinje for some time, the representative of Montenegro here began to be seriously concerned about it and feared that King Nicolas had again changed his attitude towards Serbia.

Contrary to all expectations, however, Miushkovitch was given the urgent order, a fortnight ago, to enter into a final exchange of opinions with Pashitch, as soon as possible, as to the prospective agreement and to come to Cettinje with a fixed programme.

Naturally, Pashitch wisely refrained from drawing up a programme, but took pleasure in verbally confirming to the Montenegrin representative that he was willing to accept the fundamental principles of the agreement already mentioned by me before, namely:

Preservation of the dynasty and the independence of the two States;

Amalgamation of the two armies; the supreme command over the troops within the boundaries of the respective Kingdoms will remain the prerogative of each Monarch; the establishment of a joint General Staff which will work out military plans together;

The common orientation of foreign policy and representation abroad;

Similar judicial and administrative authorities;

Union of the finances, customs, postal service and telegraphs.

Miushkovitch has taken cognizance of these desires and has gone to Cettinje. No official news has come to hand as to the success of his mission, *but from secret information it appears that King Nicolas gave his Minister a most ungracious reception and did not enter into a more detailed conversation concerning the instructions he had given him. The reception on the part of the Ministers was equally cold.* Under these conditions it will be difficult to count upon the Serbian and Montenegrin negotiations having a favourable result in the near future. In the meantime, I have received the confidential letter from Under-Secretary Neratoff of April 17, No. 289, by virtue of which I am instructed to speak to the Serbian Prime Minister about the military situation in Montenegro in connection with internal and financial policy.

After Pashitch had learned from me, that we were in principle

willing to settle the question of the Russian military instructors *in accordance with the Serbian plans in Montenegro, Pashitch asked me to express to you his profound gratitude for our constant interest in Serbia. He begs me to assure you, that in the prospective Serbo-Montenegrin agreement the Russian desires concerning the military questions will be taken into consideration.*

(533) *Sazonoff to the Russian Minister at Belgrade. Telegram, June 24-July 7, 1914. No. 1351.*

Confidential. The recent events in Serbia, which have led to an accentuation of the anti-Serbian feeling at Vienna, induce us to advise the Serbian Government to treat with the utmost caution all questions which might tend to accentuate this feeling and thus create a dangerous situation. *We are consequently of the opinion that it would be advisable to postpone the negotiations concerning the Serbo-Montenegrin rapprochement a little, for these negotiations have already attracted the attention of Austria-Hungary and even of Germany.*

I beg you to communicate confidentially this opinion to Pashitch.

(534) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 9-22, 1914. No. 69.*

According to various reports, negotiations are in progress at Berlin as to a Bulgarian loan of about 250 million francs. Up to the present, the German Government has not given its consent on account of Roumanian protests. Apparently, one has now succeeded in persuading Roumania to give up her negative attitude, and at Sofia it is assumed that the loan will be raised on condition that there is to be no expenditure on military armaments. It is a question of life and death to the Radoslavoff Cabinet to raise such a loan in the course of the next month, and it will consequently accept all conditions.

(535) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April 13-26, 1914. No. 72.*

It appears to me more and more probable, that the loan will be raised. *I am making efforts, together with the French Minister here, to prove to the King and public opinion here, that the financial policy of*

the present Bulgarian Government with regard to the economic and political situation is fatal for the country. According to my information, it is to be assumed that English and Belgian money will be employed for the loan. Do you not believe it possible to prevent this? The French Minister asserts that his Government is doing everything possible to prevent French capital from going to Bulgaria. **The Minister of Finance here has openly acknowledged to the French Minister, that this loan is absolutely necessary in order to consolidate the position of the present Cabinet.** *We must make the utmost efforts to thwart the plans of Radoslavoff and Tontcheff.*

(536) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, April* 16-29, 1914. *No.* 106.

Doumergue has just confirmed to me that he has given categorical instructions to the French banks to place no means at Bulgaria's disposal in the shape of a Bulgarian loan in Germany. According to the French Government's information from Berlin, the negotiations at Berlin have been fruitless, which Doumergue attributes to the refusal of the French banks.

(537) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, April* 23-*May* 6, 1914. *No.* 9.

I deem it extremely important to frustrate Bulgaria's intention to raise a loan in Germany, and I beg the British Government to direct its representative at Sofia to support our Minister in the fulfillment of his instructions to restrain Bulgaria from a disadvantageous financial operation which would be bound to lead to the complete economic subjection of Bulgaria by Germany. The French Minister at Sofia has already undertaken successful steps in this connection.

(538) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, April* 30-*May* 13, 1914. *No.* 84.

Urgent. After the steps taken in London and Paris, we have exhausted all our resources to prevent the raising of the loan. But the necessity of a loan is making itself felt here more and more. In consequence of this consideration, and in order to prevent the Austro-German influence here from growing stronger, I have decided to pro-

pose a final means, after having discussed it at length to-day with my French colleague and the representatives of the French banks. We might bring it to the King's cognizance that Russia, who does not trust the present Government, but who is as solicitous as before as to Bulgaria's political and financial independence, will now make the following proposal. France will be induced to advance the money needed by the country—about 100 *millions—to the King personally, without imposing the onerous conditions now being discussed at Berlin.* **At the same time the declaration must be made that, until the conclusion of a loan, France will renounce to be repaid the 75 millions, and Russia the 45 millions treasury notes due for military supplies.**

The representative of French financial interests at Sofia is convinced that such an operation is tantamount to the realisation of the loan and will render it impossible for the Berlin banks to obtain the loan. Apart from the fact, that we are removing Bulgaria from Austrian influence in future, the influence of Austria and Germany here will also be weakened in this way, and, sooner or later, the present Cabinet will be brought to fall, whereas an immediate removal of the Ministers not agreeable to us would entail great difficulties.

I took account of this, when, through Dobrovitch,[1] *I advised the King, yesterday, to change the Ministry, and for this reason I indicated the possibility of a compromise and the formation of a Coalition Government.*[2] *I may take it for granted, that the French Government will agree to our wishes on this occasion as before; naturally one must bear in mind that Paris must offer more favourable conditions for a possible loan than Berlin; besides the representative of the French banks here is sure of this. He is a very experienced man, who will be able to communicate all details to Paris at any time. If this plan, which I grant is somewhat out of the common, meets with your approval, we must come to an understanding with Paris without delay, since the Minister of Finance may sign the loan any day,—which would complicate the whole question because of the German Government. I have reflected upon this step for a long time and have come to the conclusion that there is no other way out for us if we desire to guarantee the interests of Bulgaria as well as of Russia.*

[1] Chief of Czar Ferdinand's *cabinet privé*.

[2] It should be borne in mind that Bulgaria was wholly independent of Russia in a politico-international sense.

(539) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 5-18, 1914. *No.* 122.

The French Government is of the opinion that it is in the interests of Russia, as well as of France, not to allow Bulgaria to come under the financial, and consequently also, the political, influence of Germany and Austria; for this reason it is ready to accept the plan proposed by our Minister at Sofia. One assumes here that a compromise might be effected through the formation of a Coalition Cabinet Malinoff—Gennadieff. The immediate grant of an advance payment precludes the possibility of a loan elsewhere. The granting of a loan could then be made dependent upon a change of the political orientation of Bulgaria. If Russia agrees to this, and withdraws her veto, the French Government believes that it will be able to prevail on the French banks to grant Bulgaria an advance of 80 *or* 90 *million francs and not further to insist on the repayment of the* 75 *million treasury notes. The loan might then be raised towards the end of the year.*

(540) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 10-23, 1914. *No.* 125.

Margerie has just told me that the financial institutions which have so far undertaken to raise the Bulgarian loan, namely *Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas, Crédit Lyonnais, Société Générale, Comptoir National d'Escompte,* and others, obstinately refuse to grant an advance to Bulgaria and refer to the unsatisfactory condition of the money market. Margerie's intention is to approach yet today other financial groups, which have connections with Creuzot [1] and *Régie Générale* and are interested in Bulgarian supplies and railway constructions; he hopes to be able to give me an answer tomorrow.

(541) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 12-25, 1914. *No.* 126.

The negotiations of the French Foreign Office with the banks still encounter difficulties. Margerie told me that a certain participation of the Russian banks, in the advance to be granted to Bulgaria, might facilitate the negotiations. I request urgent instructions.

[1] Manufacturers of steel, machinery, guns and military arms generally.

(542) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 17-30, 1914. *No.* 134.

The negotiations with the banks have not yet been terminated. Margerie hopes for a favourable issue, but he will hardly receive a reply before Tuesday, as Monday is Whit-Monday. *As to the text of the communication to be made to the King, the French Government is of the opinion that this communication must be couched in a wholly friendly spirit, expressive of the traditional sentiments of Russia for Bulgaria.*

For this reason it is considered here inexpedient to force the King at this moment, especially before the possibility of the German loan has been finally excluded, to pledge himself to replace the Radoslavoff Cabinet by another. The French Government proposes the following text which our Minister[1] *might communicate to the King:*

"Your Majesty is aware that the Bulgarian Government did not, according to private information, deem it necessary to appeal to the French Government in order to avail itself of the Parisian money market to satisfy the financial requirements of Bulgaria. The Bulgarian Government has appealed to German Banks, and is on the point of signing an agreement under especially onerous conditions. Such an agreement threatens to call in question the economic and, to a certain degree, also, the political independence of the country for a considerable length of time. *The Governments of Russia and France, animated by the desire to prove their disinterested friendship to Bulgaria, have approached banks in Paris and St. Petersburg in order to ascertain whether it would not be possible to place at the disposal of the Bulgarian Government those means which it is in need of at present, until in the course of a few months more favourable circumstances might enable it to conclude a definite loan.* The French and Russian banks have favourably considered this request and are prepared to advance about 600 million francs without delay. Moreover they have agreed to postpone the redemption of the treasury notes until the conclusion of the loan. *I am instructed to make to Your Majesty this communication which proves the sympathy of Russia and France for Bulgaria. My Government hopes that Your Majesty will rightly estimate the importance of this step."*

[1] The Russian at Sofia, M. Savinski. The urgency of this move is ominous. Why offer an advance when the certainty of a loan would have eased things instantly?

(543) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 17-30, 1914. *No.* 135.

Continuation of my telegram No. 134.

The French Government is convinced that such a communication would have the effect desired by Russia and France, and offer the King the possibility of preparing a change of Cabinet. So long as we confine ourselves to an advance-payment, and the loan itself has not yet been concluded, it will be possible for Russia and France effectually to influence the course of Bulgarian policy. As to the definite request, that the King should pledge himself to form a new Cabinet, we might suggest this later on, when Bulgaria, after having received a considerable advance, will no longer be in a position to disengage herself in a financial way, and only in case the King will not have had the opportunity before the end of the year, that is to say before the issue of the loan, to place the Government in the hands of other Ministers.

Margerie adds that a blunter manner of procedure at the present moment might offend the King and bring about the opposite effect.

(544) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 24-*June* 6, 1914. *No.* 143.

The negotiations with the banks are still not concluded, but Margerie hopes to receive a final, and in fact, a favourable answer. One is also of the opinion here, that we will not succeed in hindering the signing of the loan in Berlin; *that for the present it would be useless to make the proposal in question to the King and that all our efforts must be directed towards preventing parliament*[1] *from accepting the loan. Margerie agrees with the view of our Minister at Sofia, that the news of France's having refused to lend money to Bulgaria must be categorically contradicted.*

(545) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 6-19, 1914. *No.* 163.

A financial group at the head of which is the *Banque Perrier,* **has the intention of granting Bulgaria not an advance, but an immediate loan of 200 million francs. It counts in this upon the participation of the Russian banks in the form of an exchange of Bulgarian treasury notes against obligations of the new loan by our banks, so that they would not have any new expenses to incur.**

[1] The Bulgarian Sobranje.

I beg you to inform me whether such a plan has been approved by the Russian Government.

(546) *The Russian Minister at Sofia to Sazonoff. Telegram, June* 16-29, 1914. *No.* 121.

The catastrophe at Sarajewo[1] has naturally made a deep impression not only upon the exchanges of Vienna and Berlin but also of Paris. Consequently, Bauer, the representative here of the *Banque Perrier,* told me that he must send a telegram to the Parisian and Belgian Banks which are participating in the loan. Therefore, the details, which I am able to communicate to you today, are not final.

(547) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 17-30, 1914. *No.* 122.

Bauer saw Radoslavoff today, and, although he was unable to make any definite proposals owing to the latest occurrences, he was satisfied with the interview. Radoslavoff has given him to understand, that after the assassination of the Archduke, there is little hope of concluding the loan in Berlin and that the Bulgarian Government will address itself to Perrier; this, however, could only take place after some time had elapsed. Bauer leaves for Constantinople tomorrow and from there he will go to Paris. He is willing to return here as soon as this should prove to be necessary. He reiterated in the most emphatic manner that his plan could not succeed without the participation of the Russian State Bank, and, although he is acting in co-operation with the French Government, he would, in such a case, rather renounce the whole operation, though with the greatest regret. In addition to all other undesirable consequences, one will then be justified in levelling at us the reproach that we wish merely to frustrate the negotiations in Berlin, but that we ourselves have no intention of granting a loan. *In view of this consideration, it is absolutely necessary to make sure of the moral support of the Russian State Bank; Perrier sees in this support a reassurance to the French public, in so far as it would arouse in them the hope of the preservation of peace; our material participation need only be a minimum.*

[1] Assassination by members of the Narodna Odbrana, a Serbian secret political organization of a Pan-Slav character, of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria, heir presumptive, and his morganatic wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg.

BOOK THREE

THE ENTENTE AND GERMANY

INTRODUCTION TO BOOK THREE

THE ENTENTE AND GERMANY

(February 1907—July 1914)

The minutes of a meeting of the Russian ministerial council—that is the Russian cabinet—held on February first, 1907, contain the following:

"This time it is a matter of coming to a decision as to the proposal of the British government to divide Persia into spheres of influence. Until quite recently this idea had met with no approval from public opinion, and in government circles the conviction even prevailed that Persia must come entirely under Russian influence and that Russia must press onward to the Persian Gulf, which would necessitate the building of a trans-Persian railway and a fortified terminal station on the shores of the above-mentioned Gulf. The events of the past few years have, however, shown this plan to be impossible of realization and that everything must be avoided that might lead to a conflict with England."

It was the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 which marks, politically, the era which ended in the peace treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Sévres and where not.

That convention put Persia under the control of two Powers that had no interests in the victimized country that were not highly selfish. Though commonplace pleas regarding civilization were heard at the time, the fact is that exploitation was the sole reason back of the agreement. It was no different in Manchuria, Mongolia and China, where Russia had agreed with Japan to tax peoples for the benefit of governments and investors far away. To these arrangements, the French were a party—silent partners, usually,

who invested money and cashed the interest thereon, without losing for a moment sight of the fact that this had to be done in such a manner that no politico-international phase of French interestedness was ignored or damaged.

The United States and Germany did not wish to surrender the Far East to the Russo-Japo-Anglo-French interests, and insisted upon a policy known as the "Open Door." That policy was to enable all to trade in the Far East, and invest capital, for the economic development of these territories, rather than for purely political purposes, as the Russians and Japanese had especially in mind.

For getting freedom of action in the Far East, Russia ceded its arrogated right of interference in Tibet to the British, for such was the character of the deal made.

There remained Italy. As a member of the Triple Alliance, that country had always been looked upon in Paris, London and St. Petersburg as the lever that might be used to make a breach into the political parapet of Central Europe—Germany and Austria-Hungary. But Italy had her price also. She was given a free hand in the last of Turkish territories in North Africa, Cyrenaica and Lybia, and proceeded to annex them.

Thus the entire Entente was built up on the prostrate bodies of subject peoples: The Mongols in Asia, the Persians, and the Turks; upon the East in fact, if we include India and Egypt.

Austria-Hungary was in no sense, not even the narrowest, an empire, though that term is usually associated with it. It had no colonies and desired none, so far as political and military activity were applied. Together with Germany, the country paid much attention to internal development, the growth of industry and the expansion of foreign trade. Nothing could very well be more dissimilar than the policies of the two groups that formed the Triple Alliance and the Entente. The one selected "peaceful penetration" of foreign countries as the method of meeting imports with exports, and leaving a balance of trade, if possible, while the other subjected foreign aggregates and states politically and militarily, and then exploited those whom, ostensibly, the change was to benefit culturally, if that was the only way of explaining it to a gullible world public.

Germany had obtained from the Turkish government the concession for the building of the Bagdad railroad. That concession was not a very important one, as concessions go, though many statements to the contrary have been made. The Bagdad railroad was to start at Konia, the South Anatolian railhead of the Ottoman Anatolian railroad. Thence it was to be led into the Plains of Cilicia, where, at Adana, it was to join the French Syrian line Mersina-Tarsus-Adana, to continue then to Rodjo in Syria, use the right of way of another spur of the French Syrian railroad as far as Aleppo, from which point the line would have to be laid as far as Bagdad, striking the river Euphrates at Djerablus, whence a line was to be run into Persia, if the concession therefore could be obtained. The original plan was to extend the line from Bagdad to Basra, and possibly to Koweit on the Persian Gulf. How the building of the line beyond Bagdad was frustrated by the British and Russians forms a most entertaining chapter in this book.

The situation in Persia and Turkey was not in itself the starting point of the condition that led to the Great War ultimately. It was merely the first clinical symptom—the first general warning that a great conflict was going on in the chancelleries of Europe, which finally, in the nature of things, would end on the battlefield, or as some have put it, be continued there with military, instead of diplomatic, means.

With German trade in the Near East increasing, the Berlin government could not remain indifferent to the "political penetration" of Persia by Russia and Great Britain, two nations which had before demonstrated that they were none too well disposed toward Germany, as in the Morocco affair, for instance. There was no reason, moreover, why Germany should not oppose the subjection of Persia. The action itself was immoral enough, and the conduct of the Russians especially gave ample room for intervention, if not interference. But German commercial interests did not want to have their business disturbed. The Berlin government recognized officially that Russia and Great Britain had special privileges in Persia and merely took steps intended to prevent exclusion of German trade by Entente control of Persia's financial administration.

The Anglo-Russian Convention regarding Persia made it plain

everywhere that the Entente had become an international factor of definite tendencies. The terms of the Franco-Russian treaty of alliance could only be guessed at. The many *on-dits* that circulated in diplomatic circles, concerning its provisions, were so contradictory for the greater part that none could be guided by it. The case had to be observed and a diagnosis attempted. On the other hand, the world was equally in the dark in regard to the relations of France and Great Britain, designated the *entente cordiale*. None knew really whether a *casus foederis* formed a part of the agreement or not, and to this very day the documents in the case have not seen the light of day, though the correspondence here published leaves not the least doubt as to the motives actuating the statesmen of France and Great Britain. So far as the relations of Russia and Great Britain were to be estimated on the outside, the convention referred to was sufficient to warn all those who might get into conflict with either. The attachment displayed by Iswolsky and Sazonoff toward the British and French governments is truly remarkable in many respects. Sir Edward Grey, and the French ministers of foreign affairs, heard of everything the Russian government planned, with the exception of the few occasions when it was all too patent that Russian interests were not as well tended as they might have been by the Entente—from the angle of the Entente.

Germany had a good example of this in the first Morocco crisis, though somewhat in the dark still as to the meaning of the joint action of the three Powers, which obliged her to leave France in possession of much more in Morocco than she was entitled to, even under the most elastic conceptions of modern diplomacy. Much was made by France of her interests in Morocco as "neighbor" of that country, in the same manner as much was being made of that by the Russians and British in Persia, though to regard Great Britain as a "neighbor" of Persia, was probably stretching the meaning of words. At any rate, Germany emerged from her first tussle with the Entente much worsted politically. Her government did not want war, and the empire was fast changing into a commercial realm, the administration of which made necessary more concessions to the Entente than was good for all. The successful business man fears nothing more than a change to new

conditions, and Germany was rapidly acquiring that mentality, even though a small number of fierce Pan-Germans made fearful noises at times.

The aftermath of the Bosnian Crisis and Morocco was another tightening of the "iron ring" about the Triple Alliance, of which Italy was no longer a dependable member, the Agreement of Racconigi being already a fact. It was thought that the Algeciras Convention would clear the atmosphere a little, but that, too, was a fallacious hope. Such measures merely postponed the inevitable; did not eliminate it, because the roots of the evil were not so much as touched, as the documents show all too plainly. Already the question of the naval race between Germany and Great Britain was up—the foremost subject of discussion and debate. Though England had been able to call in some of the units of her fleet in Far Eastern waters, and was building ships in feverish haste, the German naval program was such that, no matter how the British government might try to avert it, the period was seen in which the Two-Power Standard could no longer be maintained.

The German government tried for a while to get a better understanding with the French. The concessions that had been made in the Morocco matter were such as to permit the belief that better relations could be reached. Emperor William went out of his way to promote them but was not very successful. Though quite an able man in some respects, he lacked the perspective necessary to see that the international situation was far beyond such remedies as personal and official concessions constituted. The fact is that the world was misleading itself, and was being misled by well sounding words and phrases that had no meaning. The meetings of kings and statesmen, especially the inevitable dinners that marked them, were made the occasions of protestations that were pleasing, but dangerous because they went to the core of things in no instance, Emperor William's interview with Dr. Dillon of the London "Daily Telegraph" duly excepted.

In November, 1909, the Bagdad railroad question became acute. The *Deutsche Bank* had obtained a concession from the Turkish government to build the line. As in all such cases, there was no great objection when news of the transaction first reached the world. Somebody needed time to create a situation. Iswolsky had

done this in the Bosnian crisis, and he did it again in this case, despite the fact that Germany had counted on his silence at least, if not his support, expecting to get in some manner recognized her very complacent spectatorship in the division of Persia.

The railroad in question was to be constructed on Ottoman territory entirely, and an agreement between the concessionary and the Turkish government would have been enough to dispose of the case. Such was the attitude of the German government and the Sublime Porte. But such was not the view of St. Petersburg, London and Paris. In these capitals it was held, that the building of the railroad was a matter that needed the sanction of the Entente governments.

The position of Iswolsky, Grey and Pichon could not be defended very easily at first, until it was decided to attack the undertaking from the angle of Turkish finance. It had been arranged that some of the money needed to build the line should be raised by a 4 per cent increase of the Turkish import duties. This gave everybody a chance to be heard. In the first place, the administration of the Turkish public debt was an international one. Great Britain, France and Russia could be heard in that department, and, finally, they advanced the argument that it could not be in the interest of the Entente to have its imports into Turkey additionally taxed for the benefit of a railroad enterprise in the hands of the Germans. Next, the kilometer-guarantee was attacked, though this, in all fairness, was modest enough, seeing that the road would be a very expensive one, the Konia-Adana division through the Taurus range having no less than 75 tunnels, one of them about three miles long, while the roadbed in the mountains was of the costliest construction even in daylight.

These arguments being answered, the Entente governments, acting always in accord, interposed many objections in regard to the branchlines that were to be laid down as economic feeders of the railroad. Every one of them was given a political and strategic character, and finally the railroad company agreed not to build any of them for the time being, despite the loss in revenue that would be suffered. While these difficulties were being reviewed and laid aside for future use, the British began to have special objections of their own. The London government decided that it would en-

danger British interests, if the railroad was extended beyond Bagdad—to Basra and Koweit on the Gulf. Again the German government reconciled itself to the pleasure of the Entente. The French also had now thought of special interests and demanded a concession from the Turkish government for a line to run from Alexandrette to Bagdad, a much better project than the Germans had, which they could not ask for, however, since the Syrian roads involved were in the control of the French. Count Benckendorff wrote to Sazonoff that the French project was entirely an obstructive scheme, and in this he was right, since the French never again pressed the point. One of the reasons why the Bagdad railroad matter did not develop into another crisis was that Russia had no money to invest and had been bluffing; that Great Britain, too, had been bluffing, and that France was not just then able to make investments, having engaged herself financially to Russia to such an extent that even the very prolific French banks found it hard to keep up the pace.

The Germans hoped that the death of King Edward would improve at least Anglo-German relations a little. But that was not to be. So long as Sir Edward Grey was in charge of British foreign affairs, no change in policy could be looked for, and King George continued within the sphere his father had created, even though the powers of the crown were again being reduced to their traditional dimensions, which were by no means generous. It was not likely that a country which had just emasculated its House of Lords would give such powers to King George as he would have needed to influence the situation as radically as was necessary in order to give Great Britain's foreign policy a new direction. All hope in that quarter was doomed to failure, therefore.

Efforts in behalf of a better understanding, between Great Britain and Germany, were a little more successful when the British Liberal Party was approached. The Liberals were not by nature in sympathy with Russian political institutions; they also failed to realize why Great Britain should pull chestnuts out of the fire for the French imperialists, but the improvements noticeable were on the surface only. As Count Benckendorff put it, the Conservatives and Liberals of Great Britain were one as imperialistic as the other—under different labels. The objections of the Liberal Party

to Russian reactionariness was certainly but a faint imitation of what the French radicals felt, and if the latter did not succeed in modifying the foreign policy of their government, the British Liberals had no chance at all. While the Russians had ample reason now and then to complain of the distrust manifested toward them by the French socialists, they never had a good cause for complaint given them by the British Liberals.

An interesting intermezzo was to shift political thought from the old bones of contention for a little while. The Dutch government decided to put its coast batteries on the mouth of the Scheldt in better shape. The Belgian press raised a loud cry against that, as did the French and British. The argument used was one of the oddest hypotheses ever advanced, to wit: That the mouth of the Scheldt was being fortified in the interest of the Germans. The sensation being a little too ridiculous, it soon died, though not without M. Iswolsky being able to report to Sazonoff:

"In spite of this, as I have learned, the newspaper campaign, which was first taken up by certain Belgian newspapers, was conducted with French money and secret participation of the French military attaché in Belgium in the hope of frustrating in this indirect manner the execution of the Dutch plan."

The fact is that the Dutch government knew what was going on in Belgium. French, British and Belgian engineers were taking stock of the military contingencies that would arise in case of a general European war. This was also the reason why the Dutch government saw fit to improve its coast defenses, generally, because in case of a general war the neutrality of Holland was as susceptible to violation as the more reinforced status of Belgium. Holland wanted to guard against the very emergency it had to meet in October, 1914, when the Entente governments considered the forcing of the Scheldt so that relief might be brought to the besieged city of Antwerp. While navigation on the river was open to all, the defense of the status of the river, and the adjacent territory, was a duty of the Dutch.

Another war crisis came in the spring of 1911 when the French violated the Algeciras Convention, and the Franco-Spanish Agreement of 1904, by sending troops into the capital of Morocco, Fez; when this was contrary to both agreements and when there was no

need of it, as shown by the documents. The Germans and Spanish feared that their interests would be again placed behind those of the French and opposed the contemplated move diplomatically. The Entente governments paid no heed to what Berlin and Madrid had to say, and the result was that the German government sent the gunboat "Panther" to Agadir, ostensibly for the purpose of protecting the Europeans in and near that port; in reality for the purpose of showing the Entente that there was an end to all things. The documents show that while the Russian and British press supported the act of France, the Russian and British foreign offices were not at all sure that the French government had not gone too far, in thus openly violating an agreement to which nearly all of Europe was a party, though on this occasion Sir Edward Grey also found it necessary to assure the French "that the agreements between England and France imposed on England the obligation to support France." He went still further, when he informed the German ambassador—to the latter's inquiry what would be the consequences if the Moroccan government passed entirely under French influence as the result of a violation of the Algeciras Act—that in the event of entanglements all English obligations would become "operative."

The Moroccan "drama" was once more taken off the stage by Germany's eating humble pie, especially when the attitude of the Italians had made it plain that in case of trouble they could not be counted upon. Italy had a military understanding with France and was counting upon permission to occupy Cyrenaica and Lybia.

In November of 1911, the armament question became acute. The Liberals wished to limit the British naval construction program, so as to have some money for socio-economic betterments which they had promised the people of England. There was to be a sort of old-age insurance, among other things. But all that took money, and, so long as the mad race in armament went on, there was little prospect of getting the sums needed. There was in Germany also an element that wished to see naval and military expenditures reduced, and the idea had many more supporters in government circles than has been assumed.

By now, however, the armed camps of Europe were no longer theories, but the sternest of facts. It was not any longer a ques-

tion of any two opponents coming together, but a matter of Germany pleasing all three of her adversaries. The situation was simply an impossible one. For instance, the documents show that the French were in reality opposed to a naval understanding between the Germans and British, because it was felt that the money Germany did not spend on her navy she would spend by increasing her army, in which event France would have to bear the brunt. The Russian government, too, was of that opinion. The result was, that the mission of Lord Haldane was doomed before he set foot into Germany. Haldane admitted to Jules Cambon, the French ambassador at Berlin, that his mission was not a matter of *entente,* but one of *détente*—detention, the French diplomatist putting the words in his mouth and he affirming them. Though the Haldane errand availed nothing, the French and Russian governments grew not a little alarmed, and Sir Edward Grey had to assure them in what he would call categorical terms that really nothing had changed, which was a fact.

All Europe was agog when Mr. Asquith, British premier, and Mr. Churchill, First lord of the admiralty, met Lord Kitchener on Malta in the spring of 1912. The attempts to come to an understanding in regard to naval preparedness had now been recorded as a complete fiasco, while the British had been able to strengthen their home fleet by leaving it to the French to patrol more of the Mediterranean. Meanwhile, France had made more loans to Russia, which were being used for the complete reorganization of the Russian army, and the building of strategic railroads along the German and Austro-Hungarian frontiers. The reports of the press from Russia brought news every day of another Pan-Slav event or demonstration, and down in Belgrade, which was a sort of Slav nerve center—the political solar plexus of the movement in fact—these activities raised loud echoes. The men who had labored hardest at the preservation of peace were dismayed. It seemed that there was no remedy for this cancer that was eating the vitals of Europe.

To make the situation worse, news came that France and Great Britain were about to conclude a formal alliance, and that Russia's position in the Entente would be similarly defined by a treaty with Great Britain. Sir Edward Grey was averse to doing either. The

mutual relations of the Entente members were perfectly satisfactory, as he viewed it, and experience had shown that the cement of common interests was strong enough to serve every purpose of the British empire, and more than that he was not inclined to contract for. The arrangements he had with France and Russia were most advantageous to his government and people, as is shown by the document with remarkable clearness. The danger of an invasion of India by Russia had been removed by occupying the Russians in Persia. The Straits question also was taken care of in this manner. The concessions to the French in Morocco had brought a fine compensation to the British—in the form of absolute control of Egypt. Out in the Far East the British interests had been promoted by a complete understanding between Japan and Russia, so that Sir Edward Grey could well afford to limit discussions with the Germans to questions in far-away Africa, which were indeed interesting topics for interviews, but influenced in no wise the tense situation in Europe. On the other hand, Sir Edward Grey had entered upon the most cordial relations with the American government, whose offer of an arbitration treaty he had accepted at a time when he was intriguing against the United States in the Far East.

In the summer of 1912 another attempt was made to improve Anglo-German relations. Why nothing came of it is shown by the documents. The meeting of the German and Russian emperors at Balticport also resulted in nothing. In that season, however, the Bagdad railroad controversy was laid by.

The Italo-Turkish war did not excite Europe very much. The outcome was a foregone conclusion, and, so long as Italy abstained from taking Turkish islands, no crisis was likely to ensue. But the situation changed completely as soon as the Balkan war was well under way. As a precaution, Austria-Hungary had concentrated some of her troops on the Serbian border, and Bethmann-Hollweg had made a speech with little tact in which he pointed to the dependable qualities of the Triple Alliance—qualities of which the Entente needed no reminder, wanted none in fact. The result was that the Russian government accepted the political situation as very strained and went so far as to make inquiry of the Swiss government what it intended doing to safeguard its neutrality in times of war. Sazonoff took care to have it become known in

London and Paris that he had taken this step. The Swiss government, growing alarmed, caused its diplomatic representatives to sound the French and British governments as to what their attitude would be in case of war, to which Grey replied that Great Britain's attitude would depend upon the circumstances. Five days later, M. Poincaré, the French minister of foreign affairs, submitted to Sir Edward Grey the draft of a speech he was to deliver in the French chamber of deputies on the foreign policy of the French government, which occasion the British secretary for foreign affairs availed himself of to say that there had been no change in British foreign policy. Grey agreed with Poincaré's speech, as did Mr. Asquith, the premier.

There was more alarm in Germany under the surface than the spectator suspected. Through Russian news channels, it had been made known that Germany was earning herself the enmity of Russia because of the support she gave to Austria-Hungary. There is no doubt that the men in Vienna regarded Germany's obligation as ally as an asset they could use *ad libitum,* and now and then it was necessary to advise caution. But Germany could not very well forsake the only fairly dependable ally she had, even if that relation made Italy an uncertain quantity and earned Germany the displeasure, if not the hatred, of the Russians. An Austria-Hungary abandoned by Germany would have been the weak prey of the Russian Pan-Slavs and Grand-Ducal war clique, and her dismemberment could not have taken place without Germany getting involved in the war anyway, since France, if not England, under such circumstances, would have found the bone of contention necessary to start trouble. There was only one way open for Germany, and that was an alliance with Russia—if that was to be had. The Franco-Russian alliance was at first directed against Great Britain, to be sure, but with Great Britain effecting an *entente* with France that alliance had to be turned against Germany for the sheer lack of any other objective. Critics of the German government, at home and abroad, were not in a position to see the real inside of the foreign offices at Paris, London and St. Petersburg, and did not understand the dumfounding dilemma which the documents now disclose.

The situation was again rendered critical in the winter of

1913-4, when the Ottoman government decided to have a German officer become the instructor general of its army, to which office was to be attached the command of the First Ottoman army stationed in and near Constantinople. London, Paris and St. Petersburg argued that this would place the Turkish army under German control, and Sazonoff said that his diplomatic representatives could not stay in a city in which a German officer was the highest in command. For the purpose of getting the necessary ground to stand on, Sazonoff assumed that the head of the military mission to Turkey would usurp every military function of the Ottoman government, when as a matter of fact there was no question of the officer being more than a contract employé of the Ottoman government, engaged to render special services, and responsible for all his acts to the Turkish ministry of war.

The situation was an awkward one for the Entente, because there was active in Turkey a British naval mission, the head of which was also a contract officer, having functions similar to those which General Liman von Sanders Pasha was to assume, and being in his turn responsible to the Turkish ministry of marine. In fact, the sphere of Admiral Limpus was the more important and greater, since he was entrusted with the management of the Turkish navy and coast defense system, the latter an organization which the British could use to the detriment of the Russians any day. Despite this, the controversy was carried to ridiculous extremes, even by Sir Edward Grey, who had to do most of his work in the dark, because it did not become him to object to the employment by the Turks of Liman Pasha, so long as he had to bear in mind that there was in Turkey a British naval mission under the command of an officer of such high standing as Admiral Limpus.

Grey did not tell the irate Russians what his point of view really was, but he admitted to the French ambassador at London that he did not wish to go too far in Constantinople, which Sazonoff thought "a very regrettable change in England's attitude." Sazonoff had started to belabor the Turkish government, with the aid of the French and British foreign offices, but Said Halim Pasha remained firm in his stand that the question of employing military and naval missions was a purely Turkish affair; which did not assume an international character, so far as the Sublime Porte saw

it, since it was for the officers in question to decide whether they wished to accept such service or not. Baffled in this manner, and full of rage, the Russian minister of foreign affairs seems to have entertained starting trouble for the Turks in Armenia, as is shown by a telegram from the Russian ambassador at Constantinople.

Liman von Sanders Pasha thought it best in the end to relinquish the command of the First army. Before the *opera-bouffe* character of the "situation" was finally recognized by the European publics, war had been imminent again, for on January 5th, 1914, Iswolsky was able to report that, in a friendly interview with von Jagow, the French ambassador at Berlin had been told that if the Liman controversy were given a "European character" Germany would not be in a position to adopt a yielding attitude. A similar statement was made by the German state secretary for foreign affairs to the British ambassador, and Iswolsky could report from Paris that "every step made in common by Russia, France and England would meet with strong resistance at Berlin and render the situation considerably more acute; should we nevertheless consider it necessary to undertake such a step in common, France would naturally join us, but in this case one must foresee the further progress of events and come to an understanding as to further actions in common."

Pourparlers between London and Berlin were still confined to African questions, when Mr. Churchill proposed that in future the relations in strength of the German and British navies should be as 10 to 16 for first-class battleships, the Canadian dreadnoughts not included, and that a "naval holiday" should ensue. The proposal led to a renewal of the rumours that Anglo-German relations were improving, and the French ambassador at London was much worried by them. Even Count Benckendorff was not immune to anxiety on that subject, taking the sound position, however, that, before much could come of anything in the political department, an understanding would have to be reached between Great Britain and Germany in matters purely economic. Such was the situation. On April 2nd, 1914, Sazonoff made bold to propose to the French government, in cautious terms, albeit, that the Triple Entente should be developed into something having more the qualities of the Triple Alliance. The documents do not show what induced him to advocate so sane a course. The fact is that the cause of peace would have been

served by that step, as Sazonoff put it in his Confidential Letter to Iswolsky of April 2nd. The diplomatic world of Europe would then have dealt with known, or at least determinable, factors, and the prospect of a general war and all its horrors might have caused even the more desperate to look before they leaped.

Sir Edward Grey was opposed to the forming of an alliance. If hitherto it had been Sazonoff who wanted freedom of action at the expense of his political friends, it was now Grey's opportunity to go a little further. He was not to be bound by an alliance. He would go as far as to conclude a naval convention with Russia, the matter having been broached to him by Poincaré and Doumergue, the former now president of France, and the latter minister of foreign affairs, on the occasion of the visit to France of King George and Queen Mary.

But before entering upon negotiations for that purpose, Grey wanted to have the Russians understand full well that there was a difference between a treaty of alliance and a mere naval convention. For this reason he caused the exchange between the French ambassador, himself and Count Benckendorff, of a document that carries on its very face the stamp of being spurious in so far as its real purpose is concerned. The document mentions that "*from time to time, during the course of the last few years, the experts of the French and British military and naval authorities have consulted with one another,*" with the letter bearing the date of November 22nd, 1912, and then states circumstantially that neither moment nor condition had been set for a *casus foederis*.

With this formality attended to, the Russian staff of admiralty adopted a resolution in which its wishes were stated, every one of them being a desideratum directed against Germany. The Russian naval attaché in London was then empowered to act as go-between and courier for the Russian and British staffs of admiralty, but before the negotiations had progressed very far, a transcript of the resolution fell into the hands of the German government—about the middle of June, 1914, a few days before Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated.

I

GENESIS OF THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN ENTENTE

(February 1907—December 1908)

(548) *Protocol of Deliberations of the Russian Ministerial Council of February 1, 1907, on the Project of a Treaty with England on Persian affairs.*

At the opening of the meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs reminded the Council that the question of an understanding with England as to Persian affairs had already been ventilated, although solely *à propos* of a loan to be granted to the Persian Government.

This time it was a matter of coming to a decision as to the proposal of the British Government to divide Persia into spheres of influence. Until quite recently, this idea had met with no approval from Russian public opinion, and in Government circles the conviction even prevailed that Persia must come entirely under Russian influence, and that Russia must press onward to the Persian Gulf, which would necessitate the building of a trans-Persian railway and a fortified terminal station on the shores of the above-mentioned Gulf. The events of the past few years, however, have shown this plan to be impossible of realization and that everything must be avoided that might lead to a conflict with England. The best means for achieving this purpose is the demarcation of the spheres of influence in Persia.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed himself as being a convinced adherent of this standpoint, and desired to learn the opinion of the Ministers present as to the expediency of such a policy, before the meeting entered upon the discussion of the proposals made by England.

The Ministerial Council accepted the principle of spheres of in-

fluence as the only basis possible for an agreement with England, whereupon the Minister of Foreign Affairs pointed out the close connection existing between this question and the Bagdad Railway. Only a treaty with England could lead to the expected results, if no objections were raised against the Treaty on the part of Germany. *As events in Morocco have shown, Germany distrusts all agreements concluded without her knowledge and which might in any manner affect her position as a world Power.* There is all the more reason for such anxiety on our part, since Germany has already turned her attention to Persia and apparently intends creating important interests for herself there. This is furthermore confirmed by the fact that the possibility of a Treaty between Russia and England has aroused lively perturbation in Germany. This however has been disposed of by the statements of the Russian Government at Berlin. *We gave them to understand that Russia would take upon herself no obligations without having previously come to an understanding with Germany, should the proposed agreement affect German interests in any way.* But to be completely secure, it would be necessary to come to a definite understanding with our Western neighbour and to circumscribe, to a certain degree, our mutual interests. *Such a basis of negotiations is presented by the Bagdad Railway which Russia has hitherto attempted to prevent by all possible means, relying on the support of France and England.* The Ministerial Council must now decide whether it be to Russia's advantage to renounce such a policy.

The Minister of Finance pointed out that the rumours of Germany's extensive economic designs on Persia were greatly exaggerated. According to his information, the German banks, which especially finance German enterprises in Asia, are so extremely occupied that they are hardly able to take part in new undertakings in Persia, all the more so as the continuous disturbances in Iran hardly create sound conditions for trade and commerce. True, several leading German banks have formed a new institution, *"Die Orientalische Bank,"* and intend opening a branch at Teheran, but, so far as is known, the activity of this institution in Persia is to be more of an informative nature, to determine which Persian markets might in the future be of use to Germany. Nevertheless, the fact of German interests in Persia cannot be denied and the under-

standing with Germany, referred to by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is therefore decidedly desirable.

Referring to the Bagdad Railway, Kokowtzeff[1] *reiterated that all his former objections to this railway still held good.* Although it is an important line of transit between Western Europe and India, and would partly replace Ocean Traffic, yet it avoids our territory and consequently does not permit us to participate in the advantages of this transit. The Bagdad Railway will also undoubtedly increase the productiveness of the territories of Asia Minor and Mesopotamia through which it passes, and thus create new competition for the Russian wheat export trade. Especial danger for our predominance in Northern Persia is embodied in the branch lines leading towards the Persian frontier, which will make access to our economic sphere of influence possible for German and English industrial products.

We cannot, however, disguise the fact that we do not possess the power to prevent the construction of the Bagdad Railway or to defer it for any length of time. The only means at our disposal—our influence on France—are not reliable and we would hardly succeed in restraining French capital from participation in this enterprise.

The idea of entering into competition with the Bagdad Railway, by the building of a new line connecting the Russian railways with India by way of Afghanistan, will also have to be given up. *England would doubtless regard such a line as far more dangerous than the Bagdad Railway. We shall therefore have to reconcile ourselves to the idea of the Bagdad Railway and endeavour to obtain compensations from Germany. In any case, the Minister does not regard Russia's participation in the Bagdad Railway as desirable. Our financial position does not permit us to take an active part; a fictitious participation, moreover, through a private banking concern or a French group of capitalists, affords us no advantages. The Russian Ambassador at London thereupon remarked, that since England had hitherto always calculated on Russian participation in the internationalising of the Bagdad Railway, our withdrawal might give quite a different aspect to the whole question.*

The Minister of Trade believes that Russian obstruction in the Bagdad Railway question would only be of use could the con-

[1] President of Ministerial Council—virtually Russian prime minister.

struction of the line be postponed for several decades. As this is impossible, it would be desirable to secure as advantageous compensations as possible in return for our acquiescence.

The Bagdad Railway is so injurious to Russian interests that we can scarcely hope to receive compensations of real importance to us. Hence we must content ourselves with paralyzing as far as possible its harm. In this respect we must differentiate between the main and the branch lines approaching the Persian frontier. For Russian interests, the main line signifies the concentration of the transit service from Europe to the Persian Gulf. Since 1883, *when the Caucasus was closed, this transit service has not passed through Russia, so that our losses now would only be indirect. The branch lines mentioned above, however, especially those touching Persian territory, signify a direct menace to us, as they would open the North Persian markets, which we have hitherto controlled, to foreign goods.* Hence the following provision in favour of Russia should be established at the pending negotiations with England and Germany:

1.) Germany guarantees that no branch lines be built in the direction of the Persian frontier, as, for instance, Khanekin.

2.) England and Germany must support us as to the renewal of the obligation of the Persian Government, valid until the year 1910, and providing that Persia would build no railways in the North [1] or that such should be built only with our sanction, consequently also with due regard to our interests.

3.) The Treaty of 1900 with Turkey relating to railways in Asia Minor must be extended in our favour.

The representatives of the War Ministry and the General Staff, unanimously confirm the impossibility of reconciling the Bagdad Railway with Russian strategic interests; the advantages which would accrue to Turkey through this railway could only be equalised by a corresponding development of our Caucasian railway system, and corresponding reinforcement of our troops in the frontier districts. We can obtain no compensations of a military nature from other States. Nevertheless, they [2] are of opinion that under certain conditions we could give our consent to the Bagdad Railway.

[1] An unusual condition in this age of railroads.
[2] The military.

(549) *Iswolsky, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Count Benckendorff, Russian Ambassador at London. Confidential Letter, Dec.* 6-19, 1907.

I have read with the liveliest interest your two letters of November 6-19, in which you report on the exchange of views on the Bagdad Railway which recently took place at Windsor between Emperor William and Baron Schön on the one, and the British Government, on the other, hand. I greatly appreciate Sir Edward Grey's attitude and the kind information he sent me through you.

I beg you to present my best thanks to the Minister and I also take this opportunity of acquainting you in a few words with the standpoint of the Imperial Government on the question of the Bagdad Railway. *The German project has met with no more sympathy in Russia than in England and France.* Without touching on the strategic importance of this enterprise, we must regard with anxiety the influence such a railway would exert in the Turkish neighbouring provinces bordering on the Caucasus, the Black Sea and Persia. Our principal source of concern, however, is the influence on Persia, for we cannot for a moment doubt that the construction of the Bagdad Railway, and its ultimate connection with future railways in Persia, will open this country to German political influence and commercial undertakings.

If England and France have retained absolute freedom of action in this matter, the position of Russia is not quite the same since the Petersburg Cabinet, at the beginning of the Anglo-Russian negotiations, assured Berlin that it would not enter into any obligations without having come to a previous friendly understanding with Berlin.

It is quite natural that our attitude towards Germany has led to an exchange of opinions for the exclusive purpose of securing our vital interests in Persia; even England herself recognised these interests as justified in the convention concluded with us. . . . . .

(550) *The Same to the Same. Letter, June* 5-18, 1908.

During the meeting of our Emperor with King Edward at Reval, I was received by His Majesty and had a number of lengthy conversations with Sir Charles Hardinge, the English Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I consider it my duty to acquaint you, confidentially, for your own personal information, with certain details of this exchange of opinions.

The general impression which this meeting has left, was an extremely favourable one from a political point of view. King Edward openly expressed his satisfaction and sees in this meeting a confirmation and strengthening of the agreement reached between Russia and England, as well as a pledge for the further solidarity of both Governments. His Majesty emphasized with particular satisfaction the hopeful turn of affairs in our domestic politics and the approval which the activity of Secretary of State Stolypin has met with in serious English circles.

Summarizing Hardinge's various declarations, I must, above all things, emphasize, that no attempt was made on his side to depart from the standpoint of concrete agreements, the existing as well as the prospective ones, nor to draw us into general political combinations. Sir Charles confirmed the fact that the London Cabinet is entirely of our opinion that the *entrevue* at Reval need occasion no anxiety to the other States; *as to what may especially concern Germany, the British Government sincerely desires to maintain the very best relations with her and does not believe that these relations will be strained for any reason in the immediate future.*

"In spite of this," Sir Charles Hardinge remarked to me, "one cannot close one's eyes to the fact, that, if Germany should continue to increase her naval armaments at the same accelerated pace, a most alarming and strained situation might arise in Europe in 7 or 8 years.[1] *Then, without doubt, Russia would be the arbiter of the situation; it is for this reason that we, in the interest of peace and the preservation of the balance of power, desire that Russia be as strong as possible on land and on sea."*

Sir Charles reiterated this idea more than once, whereby he apparently wished to have it understood that he is expressing not his own personal opinion but the decided political conviction of the London Cabinet.

Proceeding to the separate questions of interest to Russia and to England, Sir Charles spoke warmly of the hopeful results of the Agreement signed last year,[2] thanks to which not a single one of the questions which had recently arisen between Russia and Eng-

[1] The plans of the Russian General Staff provided for the outbreak of a war with Germany for the years 1915-6. The war started in 1914.

[2] Providing for the division of Persia into British and Russian "zones of influence."

land, had taken a dangerous or acute character. *According to him, it is only due to the Convention, and the absolute sincerity with which Russia fulfilled her obligations, that the incident on the Afghan Frontier did not result in the advance of the Indian troops into Afghanistan; the London Cabinet appreciates our attitude all the more since, regarded from the purely formal side of things, the Convention regarding Afghanistan, which has so far not been recognized by the Emir, has not yet come into force.....*

(551) *Memorandum transmitted by the British Foreign Office to the Russian Embassy in London. Oct.* 9, 1908.

His Majesty's Government have examined with much interest and careful attention the *aide-mèmoire* communicated by the Russian Government to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg on the 2-15 August on the subject of railway construction in Persia.

Some misapprehension appears to have arisen in regard to the precise nature of the proposals of His Majesty's Government, who, in approaching the Russian Government, contemplated *not* actual construction, but rather timely co-operation in earmarking concessions which otherwise might be exploited to the detriment of Great Britain and Russia.

His Majesty's Government attach the highest importance to a complete understanding with the Russian Government on this question. They consider, however, for reasons, which will be indicated forthwith, that any Convention now concluded by the two Powers, with the Persian Government, should be of a protective character and calculated to assure to Great Britain and Russia a secure position as regards enterprises involving political issues, whenever the time is ripe for construction.

Apart from the uncertainty of the political situation, there are many factors, now unknown quantities, which, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, render impracticable, in existing circumstances, any definite scheme of railway development in Persia, such for instance, as the absence, at any rate in Southern Persia, of all surveys even of a preliminary character, as to the ultimate constitution of the Bagdad Railway Company and the question of whether or not a branch line is constructed from Bagdad to Khanekin. Many developments of this nature must be awaited, before a

railway from Julfa to Mohammerah can be built with adequate prospects of commercial success. . . . .

His Majesty's Government are of opinion, that, in view of the important political interests at issue, Great Britain and Russia would be fully justified in informing the Persian Government that in the event of railway communications being established in Persia, they would expect to have the refusal upon terms equally favourable to any offered by third parties, of all Concessions which might be in contemplation.

(552) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Letter, Nov.* 12-25, 1908.

. . . . This matter of an armed intervention in Persia appears to me of such importance, that I should reproach myself, were I not at once to draw the attention of the Imperial Ministry to the consequences resulting from a rupture of our agreement with England, and from a new orientation of English policy. I intentionally use this manner of expression, even though I am aware that it is not usually employed in Russia. *We are fond of assuming the standpoint that we may choose between a rapprochement with England or one with Germany.*

In reality we have to choose between isolation, which would be the outcome of a German-English understanding or a *rapprochement* with England. *For political reasons, England has never been willing to entertain the idea of an agreement with Germany, but has sought security in the ententes with France and Russia.*

On the other hand, it is impossible for me to explain German policy otherwise than that the Berlin Cabinet seeks every opportunity, or even first creates the opportunity, to attempt to disrupt the two *Ententes* of England. I am daily more convinced, that between the constant friendliness of Germany towards us, and that towards England, broken off again and again and interloaded with threats, there is a difference, in the sense that *the conciliatory attitude of Germany towards England is of a more serious nature. It is not necessary for me to discuss, where, under such circumstances, the political and national interests of Russia would lie.*

I believe that it is only in London that one can judge how persistent are the efforts of Germany to come to an understanding with England,

in particular the efforts of Emperor William, who has committed one error after another, principally, because his personal efforts were fruitless and he found himself in London face to face with a stone wall. But the mistakes of the Kaiser signified just so many new difficulties which he had created for himself. If we assume that the recent events in Berlin will impose a greater reticence upon the Kaiser, then German policy, steered in this direction, would be the more dangerous to us. . . . . .

In spite of this, it is correct, if we take English mentality as it really is, that Germany as a nation is judged more favourably than hitherto. One respects her power, her energy, the results she has achieved through her work. One mistrusts the German Government most decidedly, the nation much less. And, from time to time, many voices are heard, asserting that at heart Emperor William appears to be sincere towards England. Such opinions are to be found in the press, and in the two political parties there are not unimportant elements, which adopt this point of view. Not a single one of these voices suggests, however, the possibility of an entente with Germany. Not only because the existing agreements—of which one is not so popular as the other—suffice for Englishmen, but also because the naval question forms an insurmountable barrier. . . . .

The conclusion I seek to draw from the above is, that if, for any reason, our understanding with England should be broken, in spite of the high importance which England sets upon her agreement with France, the basis for an English-German understanding would be far better prepared than is usually assumed.

(553) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Rome. Letter, Nov.* 20-*Dec.* 3, 1908.

I believe I ought to inform you of a conversation which I had with the French Ambassador. *Admiral Touchard, apparently under orders from his Government, has confidentially told me that during the last Casablanca incident,*[1] *Barrère, the French Ambassador in Rome, had learned from reliable sources, that Prince Bülow and Baron Schön had left it be understood in Rome, that Germany had received from Russia the assurance that in no case would she participate in a war between Germany and France.*

[1] Outcome of the Morocco crisis.

According to Touchard, you, too, had heard of this, but had not deemed it necessary to refute these statements. *The Ambassador added that the French Government naturally places no faith in such insinuations, but considers it its duty to communicate them to us, in case we should want to regulate the utterances of our Representatives abroad in this important question.*

I replied to Admiral Touchard that up to the present I had found no allusion to the matter in your correspondence; that neither our general attitude nor that of our Ambassador at Berlin could give the slightest cause for the insinuations reported by Barrére.

"You know," I remarked, "that the exact terms of our alliance with France are known to none; it is of course known that these agreements are above all of a defensive character, but the "casus foederis" can be merely guessed at; on the other hand, one ought to know in Berlin that the agreements between Russia and France have not been changed and that they form the unchangeable basis of our policy; this has once more been publicly confirmed at Reval this summer, and Germany has demanded no explanation from us, neither before nor during the last incident. It appears to me, moreover, that the German statesmen regard the alliance between Russia and France as an important factor of the European balance of Power; Fürst Bülow has publicly expressed this thought in the Reichstag; what alarms and excites Germany much more is the suspicion, that our recent rapprochement with England should embody the danger of an already concluded, or to be concluded, triple alliance against Germany. I have always considered it necessary to refute such a suspicion; on the occasion of my last visit at Berlin, I did not fail once more to repeat that our agreements with the London Cabinet contain nothing which is not publicly known and that we have not joined, nor intend to do so, a "new" alliance directed against anybody. I am not certain to have convinced the Berlin Cabinet, for the German Government bases its attitude in the Bosnian and Herzegovinian question on the fact of a "new grouping of Powers" and, as a necessary consequence, of drawing the alliance with Austria still closer. . . . . .

II

AFTERMATH OF THE AUSTRO-SERBIAN CRISIS

(January 1909—March 1910)

(554) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Letter, Jan. 21-Feb. 3, 1909.*

On the eighth of February, King Edward and the Queen left London for Berlin, whence their Majesties will return directly here. *This visit, in view of existing political conditions, attains a most particular significance. Since it reacts on the relations between Germany and England, it will likewise influence the general situation; one must assume that this will take place in the sense of a relaxation of tension; the degree of relaxation I am, however, unable to judge from here.*

This is the result which the public, as well as the press, has in view and this they expect all the more because they have lately been forced to recognise the perils to which peace has been exposed, for which the blame in a great degree is attributed to the Anglo-German tension.[1]

The Cabinet appears to cherish the same wish, without harbouring any too great illusions concerning the results realisable. England bound, on the one hand, through her relations with France,—relations which have lately stood a severe but convincing test in the Casablanca incident,—on the other hand, bound by her relations with Russia, has certainly not formulated any program which might form the basis for discussion in Berlin between herself and Germany alone. *I even doubt whether she has any intention of dis-*

[1] The documents show that the tension in this instance was caused by Russia's attitude in regard to the annexation by Austria-Hungary of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

cussing those points which might be proposed to her by Germany. I think, that in that respect there will be a repetition of what happened in London, on the occasion of the visit of Emperor William and at Kronberg in connection with King Edward's visit.[1]

From one point of view, the mood of the English Government is altered and for the better. Whatever may have been the attitude of German policy at the outbreak of the present Balkan crisis, the English Government to-day is convinced, that for some time past at least, the Berlin Cabinet has been advising moderation in Vienna. The London Cabinet lays too great an importance upon Germany's retaining this attitude in the future, not to touch upon that subject, and I believe that a serious effort will be made in this direction.

That is probably the only subject upon which King Edward will personally speak. I believe that His Majesty is very little disposed to return to the question of the "Iron Ring" which is alleged to encircle Germany, nor to any other questions of general politics. As I understand, King Edward is going to Berlin in order to observe closely how he will be received at Court and by the population of Berlin, and furthermore, on his return, to observe what impression the Berlin reception will have made in England. **And I am inclined to assume, that the King hopes that the Berlin reception will be better than is generally assumed in England, and that consequently the moral relief of tension will be the greater. But the King himself does not wish to talk politics.** *More than ever, I think that the necessary mutual confidence which is necessary for intimate political conversations is lacking.*[2] *Moreover, the moment for official conversations does not appear to him as well chosen, so far as his own person is concerned.* **He therefore leaves matters in the hands of his Ministers.**

I believe I have already informed Your Excellency, privately, why King Edward imposes such reserve upon himself. *Even before the publication of the revelations in the Daily Telegraph,"* [3] *and the resultant consequences as to the conduct and position of Emperor William, it had been pointed out in England, although with greater modera-*

[1] Both meetings were without good result and left international affairs worse confounded than before.

[2] Due to strained personal relations between King Edward and Emperor William.

[3] Containing statements by Emperor William that caused a world-wide sensation because of lack of tact and absence of restraint.

tion, that the rôle played by the British Sovereign was too marked and too personal, in order fully to harmonize with the constitution of the nation. The criticism which was expressed in Germany, concerning Emperor William, had evidently worked upon King Edward, and he will undoubtedly do everything in order to prevent such or rather similar manifestations, since it is out of the question that such manifestations could assume the same shape here as in Germany.

The first result is, that the King, for these reasons, will be accompanied by a responsible member of the Cabinet.

This letter was written, before I had once more spoken to Sir Charles Hardinge; I have just seen him. I asked him what I should communicate to Your Excellency concerning the visit of King Edward to Berlin. He said that the visit would take place, because the visit was owing from the King, and that the meeting would exert a quieting influence on public opinion in both countries; that this time the King would be accompanied by a member of the Cabinet, such a wish having been expressed in English circles; that Lord Crewe had only been instructed to discuss certain African questions, and only to raise the question of armaments in case the German Ministers should touch upon it, but not to take the initiative. . . . . .

In the strictest confidence, Sir Charles added that a portion of the British public harboured hopes which he held to be exaggerated. I can but declare to you, he said, that according to our opinion in the Foreign Office, so long as the question of Naval Armaments exists, the establishment of normal relations between Germany and England, however desirable in themselves, will not be possible.

(555) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan.* 28-*Feb.* 10, 1909.

Grey tells me, *à propos* of the Berlin visit, that he saw no signs of the German Government being likely to revert to the Bagdad Railroad question. If, however, this should come to pass, Hardinge would adhere to the reply already given, that the London Cabinet is prepared to negotiate all four and not two only.[1] Grey, however, does not regard it as entirely impossible that Germany

[1] Numbers refer to negotiating Powers, to wit: Great Britain, Russia, France and Germany, instead of Great Britain and Germany.

might this time be willing to accept a negotiation by four, which renders the establishment of our standpoint necessary. Grey repeated to me the instructions given to Crewe and Hardinge. *He declared to Metternich,*[1] *that the London Cabinet would not touch upon the question of a Naval budget,*[2] *but was willing to discuss this, if Germany were to take the initiative in the matter.* The Bagdad Railroad was not mentioned in this conversation with Metternich.

(556) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Jan. 28-Feb. 10, 1909.*

In accordance with his custom, the French Ambassador here has sent me copies of the documents exchanged between France and Germany in regard to Morocco; in particular, the letters that are not to be published. At the last moment, the French Government expressed the wish that Baron Schön's letter, which originally was intended only to acknowledge the receipt of the French letter, should in addition contain a repetition of the obligations assumed by Germany; Baron Schön complied with this request without hesitation.

Cambon told me, that during the early days of last week the German Government urged the French Cabinet to conclude a Supplementary Treaty to the Algeciras Act; that the French Government did not originally wish to go beyond the latter, as they were of opinion that this Agreement was one of mutual concessions; that, however, Pichon had left Jules Cambon[3] complete freedom of action in this matter.

Jules Cambon drew up the documents in question, which were then accepted by the German Government without discussion of any kind. *Hereupon, Jules Cambon went to Paris and the signatures were exchanged, as my French colleague said to me, much to the astonishment of the French Government, a privileged position in Morocco being thus suddenly accorded them by Germany, after objections had repeatedly been made by her against such a position, objections which seemed, even, to threaten peace.*

Cambon tells me that they are still wondering at Paris how the German attitude can be explained.

[1] German ambassador at London.
[2] To wit: The attempts to limit naval armament.
[3] French ambassador at Berlin.

They believe, two explanations might be given.

The first is that Germany's policy in this matter renders the personal position of Prince Bülow in Berlin easier. To me, this does not seem a very convincing explanation, for I cannot see how such important concessions could be of advantage to Prince Bülow.

The second explanation seems to me more plausible. Germany abandons the idea of making France acquiesce by means of threats, and resolves on another expedient; in order to make the desired impression still more complete, the understanding between Germany and France had to be concluded before the King of England arrived in Berlin. For this reason, the Agreement was signed on the eve of the English visit.

As Cambon[1] and political circles at Paris assume, Germany is extremely desirous of arriving at an understanding with England in regard to one or the other question, for example, the Bagdad Railway. In this respect, it seemed to the Berlin Cabinet advisable to begin with France, in order to be able to say to England: "You see, we have been able to reach an agreement even with France—the Power most closely allied with England; let us now do the same."

I told Cambon, I did not believe, Russia would raise any objection to an Agreement which, to be sure, refers to a question of comparatively minor importance, but which, nevertheless, removes a possible pretext for threatening peace. I believe, however, that the German Government cherishes the mental reservation of rendering France's close relations to England less necessary; in this respect the negotiations between Paris and Berlin are not without significance to us.

Cambon replied that Grey had expressed the same opinion; he had said to him that the new Agreement represented a new guarantee for peace and that it was certainly desirable; in this respect he did not believe, however, that the Franco-German understanding was a very profound one and for this reason it would probably remain a "façade" agreement.[2]

Cambon added that Paris was of like opinion, because the Morocco question, important as it might have become, was still, at bottom, only of

[1] Paul Cambon, French ambassador at London.
[2] Making a pleasant "front."

secondary—of colonial—importance, whereas the true reasons for the impossibility of establishing a real understanding between France and Germany lay far too deep to be removed by means of diplomatic documents.

(557) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, Feb.* 2-15, 1909.

Your telegram No. 183 received.

Grey, having received a telegram of like import from the British Ambassador at Petersburg, sent for me and declared that he was extremely sorry that the Russian Government could harbour the idea that any change could take place in English policy as regards the Near East.[1] The Press communiqués, regarding the results of the Berlin visit, are kept within the limits of the usual expressions of good-will, but it is clearly indicated that the community of views of the English and German Governments in the Balkan question relates to the maintenance of peace, the *status quo* and the new Turkish régime.

Grey declared in the most positive manner, that the policy of England was still the same as during your last visit to London, that England desired, in conjunction with Russia, to proceed in the Near East, and is prepared, as formerly, to give her diplomatic support in favour of Serbia. On the other hand, I can see no sign of any alteration in English policy, unless it be that England, now more than ever before, is desirous of maintaining peace. By the next courier I shall send you details concerning the Berlin visit, the main consequence of which is, that England has become convinced that Germany wishes no war and is ready to do all in her power to serve the cause of peace. Respecting the manner in which an Austro-Serbian conflict may be avoided, Grey remarked to me that he would furnish me with an answer in the very near future.

(558) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Feb.* 3-16, 1909.

On January 31—February 13, Their Majesties returned from Berlin, and the press of the entire world regards their visit as highly satisfactory.

[1] Persia, Turkey and the Balkans.

So far as I have heard, this journey has made the most agreeable impression upon the King and Queen. Sir Charles Hardinge stated to me that the reception, alike on the part of the Berlin people, and the German Imperial couple, was very warm and hearty, and that the few political talks he had with the Imperial Chancellor and Baron Schön were of a pleasant and conciliatory nature.

It became apparent, however, as established by further questions of mine, that those conversations were of a wholly general character, and that great care was taken to avoid such questions as have of late given rise to differences between the two Governments, so that Sir Charles himself admits that the visit led to no tangible results.

The question of the Naval Program and the Bagdad Railroad were not touched upon on the part of the German Government; as previously agreed, nothing being said on the part of the English.

Prince Bülow said much to the effect that he has never shared the views of the Vienna Cabinet, that England sought to bring about general complications, and for that purpose made use of the crisis caused by the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this he did not spare Aehrenthal; condemned his methods; and complained of the difficult situation of Germany, called upon to support an ally, whose policy Germany was not always able to approve of. The Chancellor expressed his extreme satisfaction concerning the Morocco agreement with France; he avowed the peaceful trend of German policy and stated further that Berlin had often sent moderating advice to Vienna. . . . . .

Public opinion in England has followed the details of the Berlin meeting with the greatest sympathy and in the press, as well as in political circles, the hope is expressed that relations with Germany may thereby be materially improved. *But coarse reality spares no illusions, and to-day already, in the Speech from the Throne, mention is made of the necessity of the credits for the English naval armaments being raised. Presently, the radical Cabinet will put forward a proposal, and the peacefully inclined Parliament will pass a bill for taxes with which to cover this extra expense, and all that in the knowledge that the new heavy sacrifices made are due to the naval armaments of Germany. Such arguments make a deeper impression upon the public mind than all fine words and sincere amenities.*

(559) *Count Osten-Sacken, Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Iswolsky. Letter, Feb.* 6-19, 1909.

In my telegram of last Tuesday I sent Your Excellency a brief report about my conversation with the Secretary of State, concerning the results of the visit of King Edward to Berlin from the political point of view.

You are already aware that no written agreement has been signed. Everything was confined to conversations between the Chancellor and Sir Charles Hardinge. Baron Schön has assured me, that even the Monarchs did not speak a single word about politics, and it was only at the moment of departure from the station, that *King Edward said, to Emperor William, that he considered the excitement of British public opinion and the press concerning the increase of the German fleet as ridiculous. The King expressed himself as follows*:

"You have the vote of assent of the Reichstag for the programme which you decreed necessary for the naval forces of Germany and you must carry out this programme."

As regards the interviews which took place between Sir Charles Hardinge and Prince Bülow, they were confined exclusively to Balkan questions.

According to Baron Schön, neither the Bagdad Railroad, nor Persia, nor the acquisition of coaling stations either in Africa, Asiatic or other waters were mentioned. As regards the Balkans, a complete understanding was reached, namely the necessity for the maintenance of the *status quo,* and above all things to prevent a breach between Austria, Serbia and Montenegro. . . . . .

Hardinge congratulated the Chancellor upon the conclusion of the Morocco Agreement between Germany and France. The London Cabinet sees in this a valuable pledge for peace and is prepared to support all further efforts of that kind. According to him, this was also the purpose of King Edward's visit to Berlin. The presence of His Majesty in the German Capital was not only a proof of friendly feelings towards Emperor William, but likewise a pledge to the German people that the English feel no antagonism towards them. England wishes to maintain good neighbourly relations between the two nations. The British Under-Secretary of State added that King Edward was greatly moved by the attitude of the population of

the capital and that he carried away the pleasantest memories of his reception at the Berlin Rathaus.

This summarizes the conversation between the Chancellor and the English Under-Secretary—the only political conversation during the visit.

The press imagines that it knows more, and I have already sent you a few specimens. It is difficult to ascertain whether the source of these disclosures is worthy of credit. If I should hear any further details later I shall communicate them to you.

The relations of Prince Bülow to the Kaiser remain the same, a correct, and somewhat reserved, attitude on the part of the Monarch.

(560) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Iswolsky. Confidential Report, March 20-April 2,* 1909.

A confident feeling prevails in Germany at present, since there is a general conviction that, thanks to the energy of German policy and Germany's unshakeable loyalty to her ally, the crisis in the Balkans has met with a peaceful solution.

Germany heaves a sigh of relief. Austria is bound by new ties of gratitude. The relations with France have become more satisfactory since the ratification of the last Morocco treaty, and the possibility of a meeting between Emperor William and the President of the French Republic hovers before the German imagination. The fear of isolation begins to wane. Germany is beginning to emerge from the difficult position in which she considered herself placed after the Conference of Algeciras.

Satisfaction here is all the greater, since people believe that the attitude of Germany, during the Bosnian crisis, was the best answer Germany could make to the efforts of her enemies to undermine German influence in the council of European Powers. To restore her prestige, Germany did not hesitate to stand by the side of Austria, ready, if necessary, to support her attitude by force of arms.

Now that the danger has passed, the official press endeavours not further to emphasize any more this determination, although there is a hint in the last speech of the Chancellor that Germany

would not have shrunk from extreme measures, if her own interests and those of Austria had demanded them.

The theory of an armed peace is the basis of German *Realpolitik*, and this principle Germany employs chiefly as regards England, as the debates about fleet construction have shown. *In the shade of peaceful declarations Germany is unceasingly working to increase her readiness at sea. These efforts for the present, however, aim mainly at defence and at the preservation of German prestige. Realizing the terrible danger of an armed conflict with all its consequences, the responsible leaders of German policy have in general shown great moderation of late, and the attempt of the Berlin Cabinet to thrust its rôle as mediator into the background, and to ascribe the peaceful solution of the Bosnian crisis to the initiative of Russia's policy, is, in this connection, significant.*

General appearances indicate that the main ambition of the German Government is in the direction of restoring relations of confidence with Russia and of demonstrating at the same time that Germany is an important factor in world policy.

(561) *The Same to the Same. Report, May* 15-28, 1909.

The visit of Kaiser William to Vienna, and the heartiness of the meeting of the Monarchs, continue to be the subject of interest in the press, which emphasizes that the relations between Germany and Austria-Hungary have been strengthened by new ties. The newspapers, satisfied with the stability of the Triple Alliance, point to its peaceful aims and its importance for the maintaining of the general balance of power in Europe. The effort to give special political importance to the meeting of the Monarchs in Vienna, is made clear, on the one hand, by the desire on the part of the German official press to divert public attention from the rather complicated internal situation, brought about by the carrying out of the financial reforms, while, on the other hand, in view of the increasingly difficult relations with England, it seems desirable to show that Germany is not isolated.

In spite of all attempts to bring about a rapprochement, such as the sending of deputations, exchanges of greetings and speeches between various English and German Societies, whereby the cul-

tural interests, which are common to both lands, are emphasized, the mutual distrust between England and Germany does not seem to disappear, but to become more and more deeply rooted. *Symptomatic on the one side is the English dread of a German attack upon England, reproduced by phantastic rumours of German spies and airship raids, on the other hand, characteristic of German sentiment are the constant references to the anti-German policy of England, not to speak of the feverish activities of the German authorities to strengthen the navy for the contingency of a conflict with England.*

Under the influence of such thoughts, Germany seeks to improve her relations with France and fears the possibility of a still further rapprochement of Russian and English policy, not only in oriental questions, but also in those of world-politics.

The judgment of the German press on our proceedings in Persia is noteworthy, for the newspapers seek to prove that the measures which we have taken can scarcely correspond to the wishes of England.[1]

(562) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Iswolsky. Report, June* 12-25, 1909. *No.* 41.

I regard it as my duty to transmit to you the full text of the speech, which Emperor William delivered Tuesday evening on board the "Deutschland" off Hamburg concerning his meeting with the Russian Emperor. The words of the German Monarch are so important that all the newspaper articles which have appeared during the last few weeks pale into insignificance besides them.

The expressions which Emperor William employed concerning his own love of peace, and that of the Russian Emperor, seem inspired by the loftiest feelings. Without entering into details, regarding the present political situation, Emperor William declared that: "All nations have need of peace." Therefore both Monarchs, with God's help, would work for the strengthening and maintenance of peace.

Such sentiments have not been uttered for a long time and the lively interest which they have evoked in all classes of the German population is wholly comprehensible. The newspapers of the different political parties had of course already expressed their satisfaction over

[1] A fact demonstrated by the documents.

the last meeting of the Emperors, but this feeling has now been distinctly heightened and a general optimism has become noticeable in judgments of the present political situation.

(563) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Berlin. Confidential Letter, June* 18-*July* 2, 1909.

I shall relate to you as briefly as possible the impression I received during the last meeting of our Monarch with Emperor William in Finnish waters.

First of all, let me tell you how greatly surprised I was by the marked change in the attitude of the German Monarch: During the whole time he most carefully avoided speaking either to me or with our Prime Minister about foreign affairs; the same in his conversations with His Majesty; only at the last moment, after the farewell breakfast on the "Hohenzollern," when our Monarch asked him what political question interested him most at the moment, Emperor William spoke at length about the movement of the Arabs of Yemen against the Caliphate of the Sultan, which according to his opinion must interest all States with Mohammedan population. But not a word about the relations between England and Germany. And, for the first time, we behold Emperor William reading in French a toast which had been carefully prepared and which was almost a verbatim repetition of the address of our Monarch, for the text of which we had been asked.

But though he evidently forced himself to maintain the greatest reserve in political questions, Emperor William gave free rein to his good humor and cordiality, striving to prove at every moment that his personal feelings toward our Sovereign had in no wise changed. I had moreover been told by General Tatitcheff [1] that this would probably be the attitude of Emperor William, since he had openly remarked in the presence of Baron Schön, immediately before his departure from Berlin:

"I am a constitutional sovereign; your duty it is to carry on the political conversations."

Baron Schön had indeed a long conversation with me. Naturally, we discussed the crisis provoked by Austria-Hungary, like-

[1] Military representative of the Russian Czar at Emperor William's court.

wise the rôle that Germany played in the matter and the complaints at Berlin about the state of public opinion and of the press in Russia.

As was to be expected, Schön tried to destroy what German diplomacy calls the legend of German pressure upon Russia, and he wished to convince me that in the conflict between Austria and ourselves, Germany had acted only from feelings of friendship. Without letting myself be drawn into polemics about this question, I sought to divert the attention of the German Minister to the consequences of the last crisis.

"If Europe," I remarked, "was on the eve of a general war, and if our traditional relations to Germany were temporarily clouded, the responsibility rests wholly upon Aehrenthal. So long as the Vienna Cabinet remained true to the agreement made with us, all went well. Unfortunately, Aehrenthal took it into his head to take advantage of the temporary difficulties of Russia to carry on an ambitious, I may even say, a rather unfair policy with regard to us.

"Need one be surprised, therefore, that the dissatisfaction of Russian public opinion and the press turned against Germany, who had twice declared her entire solidarity with Austrian policy and thereby made Austria's success certain? That which is disquieting above all things is the uncertainty as to whether new surprises are not imminent on the part of Aehrenthal. *But every further penetration of Austria in the Balkans may call forth a still sharper conflict than that of last winter, and if the Danube Monarchy should once more be supported by Germany, then it would be difficult to maintain the peace of Europe.*"

Baron Schön sought to explain the attitude of Germany, by saying that she faced a new grouping of the Powers in Europe and must therefore knit her ties with Austria-Hungary still closer.[1] I made use of this opportunity once more to give him positive assurances concerning the nature of our understanding with England, an understanding, which is not of a general character and which has no feature directed against Germany. I added that at St. Petersburg, as well as at Paris, there is a firm conviction that every attempt to change the present ententes into alliances would

[1] Proven beyond all doubt by these documents.

mean a serious danger to peace, and that Germany, therefore, need not harbor the least suspicion of Russia or of France.

Schön assured me, on his part, that Germany, by no means, desired to influence Austria-Hungary to undertake new enterprises in the Balkans, and that he was personally convinced that Aehrenthal meditated no new plan of adventure. *He said that it gave him the greatest satisfaction to be able to declare, that the relations between France and Germany had materially improved since the last Morocco Agreement. The only clouds on the horizon were the relations with England: in this direction the atmosphere was charged with electricity. Of course, Germany could not admit that a foreign power should dictate the extent of her naval armaments; but the present situation would become dangerous, if protracted, for which reason an amicable solution must be found.*[1] . . . .

It appears to me on the whole that the result of the meeting is very satisfactory. I believe that the dissatisfaction felt with us at Berlin has been removed and we have furnished proof to Europe that Germany maintains, as heretofore, good relations with Russia. *This was particularly important in view of the impending visit of our Monarch to France and England. It is, moreover, likely that the two Monarchs on the return voyage from England will meet once more in the Kiel Canal.*

Regarding Persia, Baron Schön repeated to me that Germany is only pursuing economic aims in that country and that the German Minister at Teheran had been instructed to abstain from any action that might cause us political difficulties. I made no complaint against Count Quadt and his subordinates and contented myself with receiving the assurances of Baron Schön.

(564) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Letter, Oct.* 28-Nov. 10, 1909.

Some of the English Ministers, in the course of yesterday's Banquet at the Guildhall, made political speeches. After Asquith had stated, that in several questions of Imperialism great headway had been made, he uttered an optimistic opinion regarding the international situation. After he had dilated upon the cordial

[1] An emotional exposition of the case which did great harm to Germany's relations with Great Britain.

relations existing between England, Japan and America, he accentuated the fact that the understanding come to by England with other nations had shown that she had no selfish or aggressive aims, and that now there was nothing in the way of regulating relations with Germany, which would be to the interest of both countries.

Without being able to guarantee the correctness of my assertions, I think that during his fortnight's visit here, Dernburg, the German Colonial Secretary, in his conversations with several of the political leaders, raised the question of German-English relations and that *the English Premier gave expression to the desire, that the relations between the two countries should be improved, only in consequence of this exchange of views.*

(565) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Iswolsky. Report, Oct.* 30-*Nov.* 12, 1909.

In Germany, the effort to establish better and franker relations with England is becoming of late more and more evident. These efforts find expression both in the press and in the speeches of the German Colonial Minister in England, after his return from Africa.

One must assume that this new Anglophile current is encouraged by the Government and that it, very likely, forms a reply to the recent utterances of Asquith, to the effect that the Cabinet had on occasion made a proposition to Germany to come to an understanding with regard to a limitation of naval armaments.

In any case the press unanimously declares, that the change of Chancellors facilitates an understanding with England and that, since Bethmann-Hollweg, who is pro-English, entered office, a great step forward had been made in that direction. The brilliant reception accorded Dernburg in England, the German-English discussions concerning the Congo, the speeches of Admirals Köster and Seymour at the presence of the German and English naval squadrons at the Hudson Celebrations, all these events have borne witness to the friendly feelings which are mutually expressed by the German and English people.

The haste and decision with which the "revelations" of the ex-Diplomat von Rath were officially denied, prove to what an extent the good will of England is valued in Berlin, and how very much it is

sought to remove all obstacles that stand in the way, or might seem to put off or delay in any manner the resumption of better relations.

(566) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, Oct. 30-Nov. 12, 1909.*

Though the visit of Archduke Francis Ferdinand[1] was wholly private, yet it cannot be denied that the general situation attaches to this event a serious political significance, which has manifested itself plainly in the extremely nervous mood of Emperor William.

Emperor William discerns in the general development of European politics certain efforts to isolate Germany and he is working all the harder to strengthen his alliance with Austria and to increase the power of the Hapsburg Monarchy. . . . . .

Everyone who knew the political feelings of Emperor William when he ascended the throne, namely his determination to carry out the last testament of his grandfather to make the relations with Russia still closer and more friendly, cannot fail to realize that during the last few years a great change has come over Emperor William in this respect. *He no longer appears to believe that there is a desire on our side to maintain further the traditional friendly relations with Germany.*[2]

Despite all conciliatory utterances, he is yielding more and more to the strivings of Austria, which wishes to use the confidence of her ally for the purpose of restoring the inner and outer power of the Danube Monarchy. There can be no question that Emperor William is still struggling inwardly. This has often found expression in his attitude toward General Tatitcheff and toward our military attaché. I regard it as my duty to inform you of the above.

(567) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Iswolsky. Letter, March 5-18, 1910.*

Although leading circles in Germany have repeatedly declared that the German Government desires a resumption of neighbourly relations between Austria and Russia, the cold reserve of Baron Schön in regard to the pending negotiations between St. Petersburg and Vienna implies quite a different attitude of the German Government.

[1] Austro-Hungarian heir apparent.
[2] In which he was well informed, as these documents show.

The reason for this is to be sought in that feeling of suspicion which Germany of late has been harbouring concerning our foreign policy; for the Germans seem ever and again to fear the efforts of the enemies of Germany to isolate her.

The ratifications of a long series of international conventions, to which Germany was not a party, as well as the fear of a conflict with England, which has increased since the Russian rapprochement with England, have called forth this distrust on the part of Germany. This became specially manifest after the meeting at Racconigi,[1] as they seem to be of the opinion in Germany that we wish to separate her from one of her allies.

There is no doubt that our negotiations with Austria awaken the same feeling of suspicion. Our efforts to draw the other Powers into these negotiations, in order thus to keep Austria in some wise from engaging in any more of Aehrenthal's adventures, are regarded in Germany as an attempt, inspired by England, to involve Austria into a formal convention, and to loosen her ties with Germany so as to deprive Germany of her second ally. This thought has found clear expression in articles of the "Vossische Zeitung" and of the "Germania," in which the British Ambassador at Vienna[2] is charged with leaving no stone unturned to break asunder the German-Austrian alliance.

The visits of the Balkan Sovereigns to St. Petersburg and Constantinople likewise cause disquiet. In the marked reserve of the Bulgarian and Serbian Ministers, they discern hostility towards Austria and they fear the formation of a Balkan block with Turkish connivance.

[1] The agreement between Russia and Italy concerning the Balkans.

[2] Cartwright had openly been charged with fostering this policy and Mensdorff, A.-H. Ambassador at London, maintained relations with Benckendorff that were considered next to be being peculiar.

III

THE ENTENTE AND THE BAGDAD R. R. QUESTION

(November 1909—June 1910)

(568) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Letter, Nov. 5-18, 1909.*

We learn on good authority that new discussions have taken place between Turkey and Germany with respect to the Bagdad Railway. The British Minister, Churchill, who met Mahmud Pasha at the German manoeuvres, informed him that an English group intended to apply for a concession from the Sublime Porte for the building of a railway from Bagdad to Koweit,[1] but without any kind of guarantees.

A similar communication would also appear to have been simultaneously made to the Turkish Ambassador. For political reasons, the Turkish Government found it difficult to sanction this proposal; in the assumption, however, that England would insist on her proposal and meet with support in the Turkish Parliament, she applied to Germany for advice. Hereby, the Berlin Cabinet is to be made to understand that the Sublime Porte intends informing the British Government that the German Bagdad Company had already been granted such a concession, but that Turkey is willing to find a means to ensure to England participation in the construction of the Persian Gulf-Bagdad Railway under the same conditions as Germany, or even France, enjoys and to concede to these three Powers control over this line.

[1] On the Persian Gulf.

In Germany, readiness has been expressed to influence the Bagdad Railway Company in this sense, but only on condition that the agreements regarding the Bulgurlu-Halif branch line, and the obligations resulting therefrom, are strictly adhered to. Apparently, the Turkish Government raises no objections.

(569) *Memorandum from the British Embassy at St. Petersburg, Nov.* 6-19, 1909.

The Russian Government is aware that Sir G. Lowther, some weeks ago, applied to the Sublime Porte for a concession for a railway to connect the Persian Gulf with Bagdad by the Valley of the Tigris. At the same time, a preferential option was requested to connect the Mediterranean with Bagdad by an extension of the above line along the Euphrates.

The Russian Government will likewise be aware that the English Government has agreed, under certain conditions, to a 4 per cent increase of the Turkish Customs duties with the reservation that no kilometer guarantee [1] be paid out of the returns of this increase and that a written assurance to this effect be demanded from Germany by the Turkish Government. It is, however, improbable that such an assurance can be given, for the Bagdad Railway Company is aware that no kilometer guarantee can be paid, unless the Powers give their consent to the increase, and unless at least a part of these returns be used for the kilometer guarantee.

A few days ago, Herr Gwinner [2] informed Mr. Babington Smith that he was now prepared to accept the following conditions.

1.) British control over the sector Bagdad-Persian Gulf.

2.) This sector is to be built with English material and by English contractors.

3.) Non-British interests to participate only in an unimportant degree in this sector.

4.) The railway north of Bagdad to be in no way dependent on the British group.

Sir Edward Grey has informed Count Metternich that the British Government could not give its consent to the increase of the Turkish Customs duties, without an arrangement being arrived at

[1] A subsidy promoting the building of this railroad.
[2] Official of the Deutsche Bank.

relevant to the Bagdad Railway. He pointed out that the necessity of inviting Russia and France to participate renders it difficult for the British Government to take part in the building of the railway. Grey has, however, just learnt that the German Government would possibly renounce in favour of England, the right to continue the railway south of Bagdad, who in this case could come to an understanding with Turkey regarding the Bagdad-Persian Gulf Railway. This is exceedingly important for the British interests in Mesopotamia and is one of the points on which the British Government has always insisted. The other Powers, including Russia, apparently incline towards consenting unconditionally to the increase of the Turkish Customs duties; the British Government will probably follow suit if Germany yields on the point just referred to.

A German line to the north of Bagdad interests the British Government much less than a railway in a different direction from Bagdad towards the West.

A decision must be arrived at on this question, as it is a matter concerning the increase of Turkish import duties. *The British Government alone cannot oppose the increase in the tariff, and once this is conceded, there will be no more obstacles in the way of the construction by Germany of the Bagdad Railway.*

(570) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Nov.* 10-23, 1909.

Strictly confidential.

The British Ambassador has handed me a memorandum from which I learn that an agreement is under way between England and Germany with respect to the Bagdad Railway, which will cause us to turn renewed attention to this question. Germany will transfer to England all her rights regarding the Bagdad-Persian Gulf line on condition that England give up the line north of Bagdad.

The British Government is apparently ready to accept the German proposal, and to consent to the Turkish Customs tariff increase as well; in so doing, England gives her sanction to the kilometer guarantee being taken from the revenues arising from the Customs increase.

It is not clearly discernible from the British memorandum whether England is now attempting to evade her former promise that all four Powers negotiate together.

At all events, we must remember that this question can take quite a new turn in case of the Anglo-German negotiations materialising, and this would cause us to exercise extraordinary precautions where the Bagdad Railway, the kilometer guarantee and the Customs increase are concerned.

I intend to submit this question to a Ministerial Council and you would oblige me by letting me have your suggestions and views.

(571) *The British Ambassador at St. Petersburg*[1] *to Iswolsky. Letter, Nov.* 11-24, 1909.

After our conversation last Friday, I submitted to my Government several of your observations, which you yourself designated as being first impressions and not your definite conclusions.

I have now received further statements from Sir Edward Grey, which I trust will dispel all ambiguities. Above all, I wish to emphasize that no arrangements have been concluded with the German Government and no negotiations taken place as yet. *My Government did not give Germany a free hand; she possessed such already by virtue of the concession.*[2] *Germany hopes to raise the necessary financial means through a tariff increase, and all the Powers, with the exception of England, were apparently willing to consent to this increase, without setting up any condition regarding the Bagdad Railway.* My Government had to consider what conditions should be formulated for the protection of British interests. Nothing further has been told the German Ambassador than what I communicated in my Memorandum of November 6-19.

As I wrote you in my private letter two or three days ago, my Government communicated to you Gwinner's proposals as soon as it received them, and our views as to which conditions would be acceptable for Germany were based on Gwinner's statements and not on any kind of negotiations with the German Government, for no negotiations have taken place.

[1] Sir Arthur Nicolson.

My Government is most desirous of learning the conditions under which the Russian Government would take part in the railway north of Bagdad.[3]

We have always demanded the control and construction of the line south of Bagdad and cannot content ourselves with less. No doubt can exist that the railway will be built eventually, whether England and Russia take a part or not, and from this point of view, England must give serious consideration to the present situation and the Gwinner proposals. *But before anything further be done in the matter Grey would like to have Russia's opinion.* There is one reason which makes the question of the southern sector of the railway a most urgent one; the Turkish Government is starting irrigation work south of Bagdad, and it is probable that the rivers will cease to be navigable owing to lack of water. The river-transport of Anglo-Indian commerce, which has been in British hands for more than fifty years, would thus be utterly lost, without any possibility of a substitute until the railway is built.

You will see from the above that my Government informed you of the Gwinner proposals without loss of time and that it has commenced no negotiations with Germany and has settled nothing. *My Government desires to be acquainted with your views on the possibility of Russian participation in the railway north of Bagdad*[4] *as soon as possible, as well as with the conditions on which you would sanction a Customs increase.*

(572) *The British Ambassador at St. Petersburg to Iswolsky. Letter, Nov. 14-27, 1909.*

In order to supplement the information already given to you, I wish to state that the British Government has taken no other steps than to inform you and Paris of the contents of Gwinner's proposals and, so far, has not yet replied to the latter. These proposals represent the minimum of what would satisfy public opinion in England and the British interests, and in order to obtain the southern sector, my Government would be willing to renounce its interests in the railway north of Bagdad. The British group wishes

Compare statements 2 and 3 and 4. Out of these contradictions came the difficulties Germany experienced in regard to the line. The railroad north of Bagdad did not enter upon territory controlled by Russia in any form.

to obtain a concession for a branch line from Bagdad to Khanekin and, although, my Government is desirous of obtaining such a concession, or of building the line in question conjointly with Russia, it has refrained from any steps whatsoever in this matter and will do nothing in this direction without Russia. My Government acknowledges that a railway line leading to a point on the boundary of the Russian sphere of influence in Persia must involve Russian interests.

The German Government knows that Gwinner has made definite proposals, but my Government wishes the negotiations to retain in future also their purely private character. We wish to learn Russia's point of view, which hitherto has been entirely unknown to us, as a decision cannot be postponed much longer respecting the Turkish Customs increase. We naturally have nothing against Germany recognising the Russian interests in the Russian zone of influence in Persia, but it would not be a matter of indifference to us should Russia in return grant Germany concessions in the neutral zone.

My Government naturally has nothing against negotiations between Russia and Germany concerning Russia's participation in the railway north of Bagdad, but the British Government hopes that Russia will keep it informed regarding such negotiations.

(573) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Letter, Nov.* 13-26, 1909.

On November 10-23, I informed you of the Memorandum handed to me by the British Ambassador here. *Enclosed you will find a copy of this document which contains, in addition to particulars of the projected understanding between England and Germany, several none too lucid references as to the reasons why England and Germany must conclude an agreement.*

I will, however, not enter into details that might possibly require to be rectified, but deem it necessary to explain the basic elements of the whole matter and its conflicting individual interests.

You, no doubt, remember that the question of the Bagdad Railway, inasmuch as this affected our direct interests, was examined in 1907 by the Ministerial Council, as the question was raised at the

time whether a special agreement should not be concluded between ourselves and Germany, comprising not only the problem of the Bagdad Railway as such, but also its possible development with reference to the whole question of railway construction in Asia Minor.

The counter-proposals worked out by us were not communicated at the time to the German Government, as the course of the then general negotiations showed that the Powers chiefly interested, apart from Russia, namely England and France, took the view proposed by the London Cabinet that this matter should be collectively examined by all four Powers. This attitude was in the highest degree advantageous for us, as the probability of the building of the Bagdad Railway seemed indefinitely postponed, and this question has indeed since then not been referred to in our negotiations with Germany.

The documents recently handed me by Nicolson contain no direct mention that England had now decided to make her attitude regarding the Bagdad Railway enterprise independent of the views and interests of France and Russia. The very fact of this communication being made would rather be a proof to the contrary, but in any case we must reckon with a possibility of England and Germany effecting an understanding on this question with comparative ease. And this consideration causes us seriously to examine our own interests and to take immediate measures for their protection. The question is whether we shall, in future, also adhere to the idea of negotiations in common among the Four Powers, or whether we shall deal with Germany separately; this question will probably be solved very soon, once we have come to an understanding with the London Cabinet. *If in my telegram I recommended to you to exercise particular caution and reserve, this arose from the consideration that we wish to preserve our absolute freedom of action.*[1]

As to the question itself, three different interests intersect each other. The significance of the railway line for us, the possibility of its construction by the aid of the kilometer guarantee, and the setting aside for this end of the income accruing from the 4 per cent Customs increase.

[1] A peculiar mental slant of Iswolsky's was that while he reserved for himself "freedom of action" in all things, he never granted the same right to others—not even his allies and associates.

The significance of the Bagdad Railway from a political, strategical and economic point of view, so far as Russia is concerned, has already been exhaustively investigated. Our standpoint remains unaltered. The construction of this railway will have injurious consequences for us and we must take measures to mitigate these results. It will hardly be possible to prevent the execution of the German project, first, because Germany's expenditure for this enterprise has already been a very large one, secondly, because, on the whole, French financial circles regard the undertaking favourably, and, thirdly, because England now seems inclined to give her consent upon certain conditions. Thus, it is now principally a matter of determining on what conditions we could declare our readiness to cease opposing the German undertaking. It must be remarked however, that Germany now apparently renounces to execute her original project in its entirety, and like England, we too shall now have to determine the limits of Germany's freedom of action in order to protect our interests in Turkey and in Persia.

As for the kilometer guarantee, it will hardly be possible to build the railway without such a guarantee. Nor will it be possible to use another source of revenue of the Turkish Government for this purpose. Thus the necessity arises of applying the 4 per cent Customs increase for this purpose. *The opposition of the Powers on this point has, however, placed insurmountable difficulties in the way of the German enterprise.*

Our further resistance might continue to hamper the German intentions in the future. A change in our attitude might be made by us dependent on the yielding attitude shown by Germany in the question of defining our mutual interests in connection with the Bagdad Railway.

Thus, we have the possibility to use the measure now proposed by Turkey to further our own important interests in the Eastern districts of Turkey. These negotiations, naturally, can be undertaken independently of the Bagdad Railway. *Even if we were to come to an understanding with the Sublime Porte on the Customs increase, this would not yet solve the problem of the kilometer guarantee; further negotiations with us will have to take place on this point.* If, on the other hand, we arrive at an understanding with Germany as to the Bagdad Railway, the Berlin Cabinet would have an interest in bringing our negotiations with Turkey to a conclusion as

soon as possible and might perhaps help us to exert pressure on Turkey.

These are the general considerations. It is your task seriously to investigate all sides of this question and to throw light on it from the local point of view. May I therefore request you to communicate your views to us at your earliest convenience?

(574) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Nov.* 14-27, 1909.

In order to render my letter of November 13-26 complete, I am enclosing the copy of a new communication from the British Ambassador here.

You will see from this that England even now does not give us a clear reply as to whether the negotiations, as to the Bagdad Railway, are to be conducted jointly or whether separate negotiations will take place between Germany and the other Powers. *Immediately on receipt of the English document, I replied to the Ambassador to the effect that the concession for the Bagdad-Khanekin line had been already granted to the German company and that new negotiations could therefore hardly be carried on with the Sublime Porte. As to the English desires, regarding the neutral zone, I have in a most friendly manner drawn the Ambassador's attention to the fact that we must be given considerable freedom of action in eventual dealings with Germany, as Germany apparently will insist on concessions on our part —just as England has the intention of resigning her participation in the railway north of Bagdad.* As for keeping England informed concerning our negotiations with Germany, I have naturally promised this, just as until now we have concealed nothing from England regarding all such negotiations with Germany.

(575) *The British Ambassador at St. Petersburg to Iswolsky. Letter, Nov.* 18-*Dec.* 1, 1909.

Referring to our former conversations regarding the Bagdad Railway, I hasten to inform you that no negotiations are taking place with the German Government, but that Gwinner has made overtures to an English group of financiers. It is not yet clear what results these discussions will have, and until these proposals are

submitted to the London Cabinet, with the sanction of the German Government, it is impossible to say whether the proposals will be acceptable to us. *Should this be the case, they will even then not be accepted by us until we have come to an understanding with Russia and France, so that a decision will always be made by all four.*[1]

(576) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Strictly Confidential Letter, Nov. 25-Dec. 8, 1909.*

I hasten to inform you of what was communicated to me in confidence by the French Ambassador here concerning the projected Anglo-German Bagdad Railway Treaty.

Bompard read to me a report, received from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, which corresponds to the information given to you by Nicolson.

The English communications have made a painful impression on the Paris Cabinet. One naturally concedes England's fair behaviour in this matter and that she has kept her promise to consider, together with France and Russia, a possible understanding with Germany concerning the Bagdad Railway. But one can read between the lines of the English communication that England is very desirous of accepting the German proposals, although the latter are not at all in keeping with French interests and hardly do justice to ours.

According to the contents, the projected treaty is of the greatest importance; it is equivalent to the partition of Turkey into a British and a German sphere of interest: England granting Germany freedom of action in Turkey, in Europe and in Asia Minor, and claiming such for herself only in the Turkish territories in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf.[2]

The French Ambassador is of the opinion that England is more and more concentrating all her energies on the domination of the roads leading to India,—the Persian Gulf and the Indian Plains—and England appears to be less and less interested in Constantinople and the Turkish problems proper. The London Cabinet has safeguarded itself by its conventions with Russia against an extension of Russian influence

[1] Iswolsky thus carried his point.

[2] For the purpose of assuring doubly that Russia would not be able to use the shores of the Persian Gulf as a naval base, which was Russia's intention.

in the Persian Gulf. The projected treaty with Germany completes England's sovereignty in the Persian Gulf. England will then attempt to free herself in Egypt from the obligations to obtain Turkey's sanction in certain political and financial matters, and once this end is attained, England will no longer take an active part in the other questions. But this cannot be desirable for France. Although several Frenchmen are taking part in the Bagdad Railway project yet this enterprise is an exclusively German one and France possesses neither a vote nor any rights at all. The number of shares in French possession is an insufficient one.

Bompard is surprised by the obstinacy with which Germany insists on the Customs increase. This obstinacy proves the correctness of the assumption that the sources of revenue assigned for the safeguarding of the railway from Eregli to El-Halif do not suffice for a second issue of certificates. *The Ambassador is of the opinion that the Powers should insist that the surplus income from the Customs should not be used for the payment of the kilometer guarantee of the Bagdad Railway. France, at any rate, cannot permit her trade to be hampered by an increase of the Customs duties in favour of a foreign enterprise.*

I, on my part, am of the opinion that, similarly to England's and Russia's delimitation of their mutual spheres of influence in Persia, such a step is now being planned by England and Germany with regard to Turkey, with the difference that Germany is conceded an enormous preponderance of power. On the other hand, the words of the Ambassador plainly point to the desirability, from the English point of view, of an Anglo-German agreement. I must also point out that England shows herself to be less and less interested in Constantinople and the purely Turkish questions as compared to her former active policy in the Near East. *This is, however, wholly in keeping with the general trend of British policy to safeguard the present British possessions by means of diplomatic conventions, withholding from all active, even purely diplomatic steps, in other questions.*

England is only debarred from simply accepting the German proposal now by the fact that she herself formerly proposed to make this question the object of common discussions by all four Powers. But the form of the present negotiations—among private groups—suffices to arrive at an understanding and renders a con-

ference of all four more difficult for us and for France. Should, furthermore, an understanding be arrived at between England and Germany, the result would be two opposing groups; France and Russia would stand alone, which has to be prevented from a political point of view. Hence, there remain only direct, though parallel, negotiations between Germany and England, Germany and Russia, and Germany and France. . . . . *this gives us the possibility of hindering the German enterprise also in future; should we give our sanction we shall be able to obtain corresponding concessions. Should the Paris Cabinet wish to bring this clause to bear on the Bagdad Railway, then we shall only be the gainers thereby.* . . . . . It is also important that the initiative of a partition of Turkey into definite spheres of influence be taken by Germany, as this will certainly be injurious to German interests in Turkey.[1]

(577) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Report, Nov. 26-Dec. 9, 1909.*

England has made explanations at Paris similar to those which she had made at St. Petersburg as to the negotiations opened by Gwinner. *I must however observe that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs has disapproved the English intention to build the line to the Persian Gulf, which is of direct interest to England, dependent on the international question of the Turkish Customs increase.*

On this occasion, I should like to state that the struggle between the English political parties, and between the Upper and Lower Houses, is being watched with the greatest interest here in France. The French sympathies, naturally, go out to the present Government, which attempts to oppose the century-old privileges of the English Lords. *From a political point of view, however, Pichon is alarmed by the inner political struggle in England which detracts the attention of the British Government from questions of foreign policy. In view of the present situation in France, however, it is of the utmost importance that England continue to play her former leading part in European matters and act as a check on Germany; should England recede to the background bellicose intentions might once more arise in Germany, which would be dangerous to France.*

[1] The documents show Germany had no such intention and that Tcharikoff set up this hypothesis for the sole purpose of causing friction.

(578) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Dec. 9-22, 1909.*

The French Ambassador here informs me, that Hilmi Pasha[1] had categorically declared Turkey would in no case consent to a solution of the Bagdad question which would lead to the partition of this railway between the interested Powers. *Turkey can only admit the participation of the Powers in equal parts on the whole length of the line.*[2] *Louis*[3] *is of the opinion that this is the view not only of the Turkish Government but of Young Turkish circles as well. The attitude taken by Turkey can seriously jeopardize the execution of the Anglo-German understanding and shows us a way out of the present difficulties.*

(579) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Letter, Dec. 6-19, 1909.*

In Grey's absence, I pointed out to the Under-Secretary of State, Sir Charles Hardinge, the difficulties resulting from the last Anglo-German negotiations on the Bagdad Railway. *Sir Charles reiterated that until now it has only been a question of discussions among financial groups and that nothing had yet been determined as to definite proposals.*

Although he expressed some doubt as to the possibility of bringing the negotiations to a successful issue, Sir Charles did not conceal from me that an unexpected proposal, in absolute keeping with England's political interests, renders it hardly possible for the London Cabinet not to take it into consideration. *He added however, that the Russian interests would have to be adequately protected and that the British Government therefore immediately informed us of the negotiations.*

I pointed out how disadvantageous to us the creation of anything resembling a German sphere of influence in the north of Asia Minor[4] would be. Sir Charles admitted this and immediately referred to the Samsun-Sivas Line and the Bagdad-Khanekin branch, which were both suited to act as a safeguard against this danger; England had already acknowledged Russia's interest in these two questions. . . . . .

[1] Ottoman minister of foreign affairs.
[2] A precaution against the partition of Turkey.
[3] Georges Louis, French ambassador at St. Petersburg.
[4] Consisted entirely of the railroad concession in question.

To my question as to the probable political results of a solution of the Bagdad Railway question, he replied that "there will be one important question less between England and Germany—the only concrete question." I did not consider it necessary to mention the question of the negotiations between all four Powers, as I knew that Sir Ernest Cassel [1] had not yet returned from Berlin.

My impression is that the British Government will admit only one solution of the Bagdad Railway problem, if the line be carried through to the Persian Gulf, namely: the cession to England of the last sector;[2] *moreover, the British Government is in no hurry, will not admit further concessions in favour of Germany and would view the rupture of the present negotiations with philosophical calm.* British interests can be safeguarded only by the maintenance of the *status quo* or the solution proposed to-day. . . . . .

(580) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 8-21, 1909. *No.* 240.

Hardinge informs me that Cassel has returned from Berlin without an agreement having been arrived at so far. Cambon has communicated to me a report from the French Ambassador in Constantinople to the effect that Hilmi Pasha is seriously opposing the partition of the railway in three different sectors. Cambon has informed Hardinge of this report. The latter tells me he believes the information to be correct.

(581) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 11-24, 1909. *No.* 243.

Grey has made to me the following communication concerning the Bagdad Railway.

As the British Government had learned that the surplus accruing from the Customs had been promised to the German Bagdad Railway Company,[3] and that in this case the railway would be built under conditions disadvantageous to England, the London Cabinet has refused its consent to the requested Customs increase, if the Turkish Government does not give a pledge that the surplus

[1] British negotiator in the Bagdad railroad matter.
[2] Bagdad-Basra-Koweit.
[3] Grey knew this before, of course.

will not benefit the German enterprise and if an official German declaration to this effect is not forthcoming. The latter declaration could not be given.

At this juncture, Gwinner indirectly proposed a method which might have avoided these difficulties from an English point of view. The Russian Government was at once informed of this. Thereupon Sir Ernest Cassel offered his services to continue the negotiations with Gwinner at Berlin. *He was authorised to do so, on the condition, however, that the result of these negotiations could in no wise bind the decisions of the British Government, as Russia and France are interested in the result of an Anglo-German agreement.* . . . . . .

(582) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Report, Dec.* 11-24, 1909.

. . . The French Ambassador here is of the opinion that the French Government should inform the Sublime Porte not only verbally as hitherto, but also in writing, that it cannot consent to the increase of duties on French goods in favour of an enterprise in which France does not participate and that, should the Sublime Porte have advised Germany to come to an understanding with England on the Bagdad Railway question, Germany should also enter into negotiations with France.

As to the negotiations themselves, Bompard attributes to them not only local, purely Turkish, but rather a general European significance. In these negotiations, he discerns an express desire on the part of England and Germany to improve their present relations, the Bagdad Railway question offering a favourable opportunity. The possibility of an Anglo-German rapprochement is disadvantageous and harmful to France and Russia.[1] In any case both Powers will lose the English support at Constantinople on which they were hitherto able to rely.

I myself go even further than my French colleague, and reckon with the possibility of a Franco-German understanding respecting the Bagdad Railway which, so far as French capital is concerned, already exists. We can hardly expect that the Sublime Porte will place difficulties in the way of the proposed agreement and that thus a way out of the difficult situation be offered to us. *In this case we are threatened*

[1] Such was the milk in this cocoa-nut.

by disadvantageous isolation, should we not by then have arrived at an understanding with Germany and Turkey.

(583) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Iswolsky. Report, Jan. 7-20, 1910.*

During the past few days, negotiations on the Bagdad Railway have taken place between the French and Turkish Governments. Turkey enquired of the Paris Cabinet whether the latter would give its consent to a 4 per cent increase of the import duties. *The French Minister of Foreign Affairs replied, that in view of the fact that England and Germany had demanded concessions for railways, the French Government also holds itself justified in demanding the concessions for a railway from Bagdad to the town of Homs in Syria,* from where a French railroad leads to the Mediterranean and the other Syrian towns. To this answer was made in Constantinople that Turkey would under no conditions admit the establishment of foreign spheres of influence and railways resulting therefrom.

Consequently the proposed agreement between England and Germany would appear impracticable and the entire question of the Bagdad Railway seems indefinitely postponed. It is therefore necessary that some new event bring this question up again.

(584) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Letter, Jan. 20-Feb. 2, 1910.*

Like our Ambassador in Constantinople, I am now restricting myself to personal conversations with my colleagues, principally with Cambon. The latter yesterday informed me that he had yesterday asked Grey how matters stood with respect to the Bagdad Railway. The Minister had confined himself to replying in French:

"It does not go at all."

On his return from Paris, Cambon spoke to me of Gwinner's visit to the French capital, which had also led to no result.

Gwinner is said to have expressed himself in very categorical terms and to have declared that the whole question was of no political importance and that Russia was not directly interested. He had pointed out that in case of necessity, Germany could renounce her claim to the 4 per cent Customs increase for the construction

of the 840 kilometers, as the surplus of the Public Debt would be set free and could be used for the financing of the Bagdad Railway.

Cambon regards this supposition as an empty threat, as the Turkish Budget of 1910 closes with a deficit of 100 million francs. To cover this, it would be necessary to raise a loan, which in turn would require the above-mentioned surplus as cover.

Grey also mentioned the opinion expressed by Gwinner that it would suffice if the financial groups come to an understanding among themselves and that the sanction of the Government would be unnecessary. Cambon, however, believes that, so far as England is concerned, this would mean an exclusively financial control of the southern sector. It is hardly to be assumed that the British Government would content itself with this. England apparently insists on a complete control, that is, England wishes to build her sector of the Bagdad Railway with her own money and to work it by British officials. Government participation therefore appears absolutely necessary.

As to the French demands, Cambon seems to have been more open towards me than with our Ambassador at Paris. Apart from branch lines leading in Syria to the Mediterranean, the French Government insists on a special line which, starting from Bagdad, turns almost due west and after crossing Syria ends in Homs-Tripoli. *If I do not err, this means a purely obstructive scheme.*

Without desiring to express an opinion concerning the future, I have gained the impression that the negotiations of the financial groups at Berlin, London and Paris have so far led to no result.

The Turkish Ambassador here is firmly convinced that Turkey will never sanction the principle of separate sectors.

(585) *Iswolsky to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, March 24-April 6, 1910. No. 457.*

I am telegraphing to Constantinople:

The French Ambassador reports that the negotiations between Turkey and Germany concerning the Bagdad Railway at Constantinople have been resumed, it being intended to use the surplus of the "Dime" for the kilometer guarantee in the place of the Customs increase. Louis adds that, according to information the

French Government possesses, these negotiations will very shortly lead to a result advantageous to Germany.

I must request you to examine this information and to inform me in what manner such negotiations might react on the mutual relations between England, France, Germany and Turkey.

(586) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, March 26-April 8, 1910. No. 75.*

Your telegram No. 457 received.

A similar communication was made here yesterday by the French Chargé d'Affaires, who was given the reply that a telegram had been received a few days ago from the British Ambassador at Constantinople to the effect that a speedy, and, for Germany advantageous, termination of the negotiations between Germany and Turkey concerning the substitution of the "Dime" for the Customs increase is to be expected. Sir G. Lowther[1] has been instructed to lodge a protest at Constantinople, as the opinion prevails here that such a combination is not permissible and only serves to give the Sublime Porte the possibility of covering the shortage in the "Dime" by the surplus income from the Customs. So far as is known, the surplus of the "Dime" is not yet free and the Turkish Government will only be able to dispose of it within a few months. Mallet added that the Sublime Porte had at the same time been asked what advantages England might expect should the German-Turkish agreement be concluded.

(587) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Telegram, March 27-April 9, 1910.*

The French Ambassador here has informed me that he himself had sent to Paris the news of fresh negotiations between Germany and Turkey. *The opposition of the London Cabinet, and the renewal of its claims on the Bagdad-Basra sector, has again brought the entire matter to a standstill to the marked displeasure of Germany and Turkey, and this has also called forth a certain degree of disappointment in France.*

[1] British ambassador to Turkey.

(588) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, April 6-19, 1910. No. 79.*

Hardinge tells me that, in consequence of the German claims, he does not consider an understanding between England and Germany to be any longer possible. *The British Government is also firmly determined to demand from Turkey an English concession for the line leading to the sea.*

(589) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Report, April 8-21, 1910.*

The British Ambassador has read me the text of his communication to the Turkish Government, which is referred to in the telegram of our London Chargé d'Affaires of March 26.

This communication corresponds with the contents of the above telegram, with the one difference, that Lowther does not enquire as to the advantages England would receive, but, in place of this, points out directly that England must participate, in common with Germany, in the Bagdad-Basra sector.

It has struck me that this claim is far more moderate than the condition hitherto imposed by England, namely, that "the Bagdad-Basra sector must belong to the English."

To my question, what was to be understood by "participation in common," the Ambassador replied that this was synonymous with the safeguarding of British interests. Apparently the British Government no longer deems it possible to bring the entire Bagdad-Basra line into its own possession, and is ready to share it with Germany, demanding, however, predominance for itself, both in the question of construction and exploitation of this line. My British colleague gave me to understand that he regards the whole affair as a failure, inasmuch as Germany will succeed in carrying the railway to Bagdad with the help of the "Dime," quite independently of whether the other Powers acquiesce in the increase of the Turkish Customs or not.

It seems to me that he is right, and in particular Baron Marschall [1] is right, who only recently declared that the Germans would carry the Anatolian Railway to Bagdad, as they alone could con-

[1] German ambassador at Constantinople.

struct this "first-class" line which Turkey needs. *On the other hand, the last, and considerably more modest, demands of the English are far more acceptable to Turkey than the earlier ones, which were analogous to a partition of Turkey into spheres of influence.*

As the Germans at the last Berlin negotiations were apparently ready to leave the Bagdad-Basra sector to the English, the possibility of an adjustment of the Bagdad conflict between England, Germany and Turkey has to be reckoned with.

This will not be agreeable to the French, but they will find a compensation in the participation of their capital in the El Halifa-Bagdad enterprise, where the "Dime" offers a good security.

It now remains to determine the compensation we could demand. Germany and England must certainly grant us some concessions, if only in view of the fact that the Anglo-German negotiations take place, if not with our direct participation, at any rate with our knowledge, whereby the London Cabinet scarcely has the right to conclude an agreement with Germany before the Russian interests are safeguarded. . . . . .

(590) *Iswolsky to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, April 9-22, 1910. No. 523.*

Your telegram No. 79 received.

As the Bagdad Railway negotiations are extremely complicated, we should like to know what Hardinge meant when he spoke of the impossibility of an Anglo-German agreement on the Bagdad Railway question, and which line to the sea is meant for which England demands a concession from the Turkish Government.

(591) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, April 10-23, 1910. No. 80.*

Your telegram No. 523 received.

It will be difficult to give a reply before Grey returns next Friday. Hardinge told me that the demands which were set up in the course of a conversation between Bethmann and Goschen[1] left no room for the hope that an Anglo-German understanding

[1] British ambassador at Berlin.

would be arrived at; that the British Government does not at present intend to answer the Germans, and will restrict itself to demanding a concession at Constantinople for a railroad leading to the sea,—as I infer, in connection with the French Tripoli-Homs-Bagdad project.[1]

(592) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 12-25, 1910. *No.* 82.

In reply to your telegram No. 523.

England demands the concession for a railway connecting Bagdad with the Persian Gulf. *The London Cabinet will demand this concession in any case, quite independent of whether the French demand for a Homs-Bagdad concession leads to any result or not, in order thus to create a "fait accompli."*

(593) *The Same to the Same. Letter, April* 13-26, 1910.

I have received your telegram No. 523 with reference to the state of the Bagdad Railway question and have replied in like manner.

During my conversation with Sir Charles Hardinge, the latter did not explain further why he does not believe in the success of the Anglo-German negotiations. He restricted himself to the statement that, far from returning to the conditions taken into consideration by Cassel and Gwinner, which had already been declared unacceptable by England, the Berlin Cabinet had to-day propounded demands even far in excess of these. He told me that the British Government did not intend to give a direct reply to the statement made to Goschen by Bethmann-Hollweg, but to confront Germany with a *fait accompli*. . . . . .

(594) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 21-*May* 4, 1910. *No.* 85.

Your telegram No. 523 received.

Grey confirmed to me that he does not at present intend to follow up the overtures made by the German Imperial Chancellor to Goschen. According to his opinion this conversation necessi-

[1] A wrong inference.

tates no direct reply; above all, Grey sees no basis for negotiations in this conversation, either for a political understanding or for a solution of the Bagdad Railway question.

Grey regards it as inadmissible that the British Government, which still has several strings to its bow, should render its participation dependent on concessions in Persia. Grey told me that he by no means intends systematically to oppose the Bagdad Railway, but that the London Cabinet is against the monopoly of another Power where a railway line is concerned which is of the greatest importance for the political and economic interests of England. It may be inferred from this that the British Government will either obtain participation in the line under the conditions deemed necessary—without making any concessions in Persia,—or the English interests will be safeguarded by England building the final sector alone.

Grey has given the Turkish Government to understand that under present circumstances he would not give his consent to the 4 per cent Customs increase. He believes that the intention to use the "Dime" surplus for the Bagdad Railway can only be realized if the Turkish Government receive the consent of the Powers to the Customs increase. Grey believes that this is only a financial manoeuvre. Grey's words were by no means pessimistic.

(595) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Iswolsky. Telegram, April 28-May* 11, 1910.

The British Ambassador here tells me that he has had an exhaustive conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Grand Vizier as to Grey's demand of a Bagdad-Persian Gulf concession. The Turks have declared that they were under legal and moral obligations to Germany as regards the entire Bagdad Line down to the Persian Gulf. The Ambassador replied that, even if there existed a moral obligation to Germany, there was no question of a legal one. *England cannot give her assent to the Customs increase without receiving corresponding advantage for British merchants.* The Turks did not refer to a "sphere of interest." The conversation has had no result.

Apparently, Rifaat Pasha intends to discuss the whole matter in London, whither he leaves to-morrow with the Heir Apparent to attend King Edward's funeral. . . . . .

(596) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Telegram, May 5-18, 1910. No. 107.*

I have asked Hardinge how matters stood with regard to the English concessions to the Persian Gulf. Hardinge replied that this question would be discussed with Rifaat Pasha on the occasion of his presence in London and that the London Cabinet intended carrying on these negotiations in a very energetic manner.

(597) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May 25-June 7, 1910. No. 122.*

It is confirmed that the Anglo-Turkish negotiations are not proceeding favourably. Under these conditions it would be most disadvantageous to negotiate with Germany, and it is hardly likely that the London Cabinet will take up negotiations with Berlin. I believe that we, too, are in the same unfavourable position. *It seems to me that we should first come to an understanding on a common basis and then await a more favourable moment.*[1] *In any case it is preferred here that Germany should take the initiative.*

[1] The solution of the problem was postponed.

IV

A NEW PHASE OF INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION

(Effect of the Potsdam Meeting)

(April 1910—February 1911)

(598) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Iswolsky. Letter, April 27-May 10, 1910.*

The King [1] did me the honour to invite me this morning to Marlborough House. His Majesty has also received the other Ambassadors in private audience.

The King was deeply moved. After some brief words as to his personal grief,[2] and after a few compliments paid me personally, the King, upon my mentioning the relations between England and Russia, remarked to me that even at the time when these relations were by no means what they should have been, he had always wished to see the difficulties settled. He had observed, to his greatest satisfaction, that the negotiations had led to results; he also desired that our relations in the future should be as friendly and as cordial as at present. Above all things he would like that this satisfactory state of affairs should be a lasting one.

"As far as I am concerned," said the King, "I will work all my life to achieve this result."

I remarked to His Majesty that I would esteem it highly, if he would grant me the permission to transmit these words to my Government. The King gave his consent. *The personal sentiments of the King, as long as he was heir to the throne, have always been*

[1] George V.
[2] Death of Edward VII.

known to me, but now, since they have been confirmed in the most solemn fashion on the day following his accession, his words seem to me to possess a quite particular significance.

(599) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May 29-June* 11, 1910. *No.* 125.

Hardinge this morning advised me of his appointment as Viceroy of India and added that, if he has been able to serve the relations between Russia and England in his present office, he was now all the more firmly determined, in going to India, to work in the same sense and that he hoped to be still more successful there. Hardinge said he would be grateful, if his words would be submitted to our Emperor.

(600) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 2-15, 1910. *No.* 134.

In connection with the probable recall of Nicolson from St. Petersburg, Grey told me last evening that he hoped that the Petersburg Cabinet would be convinced that the appointment of the Viceroy of India, and the Ambassadorial change at St. Petersburg, were intended chiefly to strengthen the ties between Russia and England. It is his opinion, that the situation demanded that somebody should be in office in London who is as well acquainted with the current questions as Hardinge and Nicolson. Grey told me he insisted upon the argument, because the Emperor, perhaps, would not like to part with an Ambassador to whom he had always given so gracious a reception. Hardinge told me that the King had spoken of the consideration due to our Emperor.

(601) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 25-*July* 8, 1910. *No.* 178.

I was received by the King this morning, in order to hand him my credentials. *His Majesty said to me that he would repeat what Grey had probably already told me, namely, that the recall of Nicolson was due to a single reason—the wish to preserve the excellent relations between Russia and England and render them still closer.*[1] **The King added, that he had written to our Sovereign on this subject.**

[1] Sir Arthur Nicolson was a most conspicuous and sinister figure in international relations thereafter.

(602) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Iswolsky. Report, July 23-Aug.* 5, 1910.

The new German Secretary of State has arrived at Berlin and at once assumed his office. On the way from Bucharest, Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter proceeded to Marienbad to confer with his Austro-Hungarian colleague. Public opinion here emphasizes the friendly relations between the two Ministers and welcomes Kiderlen's determination to come into personal contact with Aehrenthal before entering upon his new functions. Similar significance was attached in its day to the meeting between the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the German Chancellor.

The fact that the Balkan problems, in which Herr von Kiderlen is regarded as an expert, have grown more acute, coupled with the arrival of the Turkish Grand Vizier at Marienbad, and the possibility of a more active policy of Russia in the Balkans have, it is assumed here, rendered personal conferences between the two Ministers necessary.

It is rumored that these negotiations have taken the shape of a definite arrangement, making a common policy of the two allied Powers in the Balkans possible.

(603) *The Same to Sazonoff. Report, Oct. 29-Nov.* 11, 1910. *No.* 103.

The visit of our Emperor to Potsdam has made a great impression in all circles of public opinion here. Not only have Court and Government circles expressed their pleasure at this event, but all newspapers, too, attribute historic importance to it.

In accordance with given instructions, stress was at first laid on the family character of the visit. Later, however, a more correct appreciation of this event found expression and some newspapers, as for instance the "Berliner Tageblatt" and the "Frankfurter Zeitung" hastened to efface the unpleasant impression which their uncalled-for judgments of Russian affairs had produced on us. Without making any reference to a definite political question the "Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung"[1] speaks merely of the influence which the personal relations of the two Monarchs will have on the further preservation of peace.

[1] Semi-official daily of the German government.

(604) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, Dec. 2-15, 1910.*

Grey requested me to call on him and said he desired to discuss certain political questions with me, to which I had referred in my conversations with Sir A. Nicolson [1] during his absence.

In the first place there was the linking up of the Russian and Indian railroads in Persia. I explained that I had no official authorisation to discuss this project with the British Government, but that I knew Your Excellency's views, which favoured this project, both as regards the economic advantages and more especially on account of the political effect, as such an undertaking could only be possible when the mutual mistrust of the past years had finally vanished; the friendship and mutual confidence between England and Russia would thus be confirmed more efficiently than by any other means.[2]

I added that we would make an official proposal later, when the project had assumed a more definite shape. Sir Edward replied:

"I am about in the same position as M. Sazonoff. The question will be examined. The Secretary of State for India has already done so and the Government will soon have to come to a decision as to its attitude. *For my part, I want to point out that the time has come to silence all objections arising from the former mistrust between England and Russia.* This does not preclude the necessity of an investigation by the Government, as we shall have to ask the Committee of National Defence."

The Minister then pointed out that this matter would also now have to be considered from another standpoint. It is a question of the Bagdad Railway. *Even if the fear of an invasion of India by Russia has now vanished, yet too close a connection of the Bagdad Railway with the Indian railways through Persia creates no inconsiderable difficulties. A strategical main line, beginning in Turkey would thus exist: this circumstance must be taken into serious consideration nowadays when Islam appears to be awakening everywhere.*

I interrupted the Minister with the observation that you had already pronounced yourself against the trans-Persian Railway touching Ispahan, as this town was too close to Khanekin; it

[1] British under-secretary of foreign affairs.

[2] Hitherto violently opposed by the British government which feared, and properly so, that the joining of these railroads would facilitate, if not invite, an invasion of India by Russian troops.

seemed to me that this should allay the Minister's fears. Grey assented to this, but said that Teheran too was not far away.

I replied that his standpoint was only justified, when all the difficulties in the way of a construction of the Bagdad Railway should have been overcome, in other words, when an agreement would have been reached between the Governments of England, France, Germany, Russia and Turkey.[1]

Sir Edward thereupon enquired whether the last agreements between Russia and Germany, the general contents of which you had so kindly transmitted to him, would not influence the further course of the Bagdad Railway question. *I replied that I had learnt from you in person that the agreements mentioned, in so far as they relate to a connecting of the railways, would only come into force when an understanding had been arrived at between Germany, on the one hand, and England and France, on the other: this had been your standpoint towards the German Ministers. . . . .*

I added that there could be no idea of linking up the lines in Khanekin before the entire Bagdad Railway question had been solved in an international sense.

(605) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Dec. 7-20, 1910.*

Your letter of December 2 received.

Your answer to Grey contains a serious error. *Our consent to the linking up of the railways at Khanekin does not depend on a previous understanding of the four Powers in the Bagdad question.*[2] The latter refers only to our wish that, in case of a partition of the railway into separate sections, the branch line Sedidje-Khanekin be left to us. We went on the assumption that the Germans would construct the Bagdad-Khanekin railway in any case and that we had only to protect our own interests in Persia. I spoke, before my journey to Potsdam, to O'Beirne[3] in this sense, and, after my return, to Buchanan.[4] This is the standpoint I also adopted in my conversa-

[1] Broaching again in this manner the plan of the Russians to have the Bagdad railroad question decided by all instead of Germany and Great Britain and Turkey, which plan, however, was changed at the Potsdam meeting.
[2] The Russian government's "freedom of action."
[3] British chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg.
[4] Sir George, British ambassador at St. Petersburg.

tions with you. I request you immediately to inform Grey of this in order to clear up the misunderstanding which has arisen.

(606) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 8-21, 1910. No. 279.*

Your telegram No. 1779 received.

In Grey's absence I called on Nicolson and informed him that I must rectify an error which had arisen in the course of my last conversation with Grey. *I explained to him that Russia had undertaken the obligation, quite independent of an agreement among the four Powers, to connect the railways, she would build in North Persia, with Khanekin, as soon as Germany should have completed the sectors Koniah-Bagdad and Bagdad-Khanekin.* I added, that we had been prompted by the consideration that even without the agreement of the four Powers, the construction of the above-mentioned sections by Germany is assured, and that we therefore must take measures for the protection of our interests in our Persian sphere of influence. *I added, that in the contemplated understanding with Germany,*[1] *complete liberty had been left us regarding the direction of our railways in Persia, and that we had declared that Germany must not reckon on any concession, of a financial or economic nature, on our part in the Bagdad Railway question.* This leaves us complete freedom of action in case of German negotiations with England or France, or in other words, we had in no way pledged ourselves in the question of the 4 per cent Customs increase.

(607) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Dec. 23, 1910-Jan. 5, 1911.*

Near as we are to the general elections, it is just as difficult to foresee the results. Speeches follow one another without casting any new light upon the situation. All has already been said, and the speakers limit themselves to repetitions, which naturally assume forms more and more acute. The question of the Upper House, or rather its legislative powers, comes ever more into the fore-

[1] The Russian government did not usually honor "contemplated" understandings. The change of attitude was due to the meeting of the Russian and German emperors at Potsdam.

ground, but even in this connection there is neither a program nor a solution proposed.

The present electoral campaign—apart from these purely domestic interests—is noticeable through the renewed flaring up of an unforeseen chauvinism. This finds expression in the bogey of the German menace, which is emphasized more or less by all parties, but especially by the Conservatives. It is no longer only a matter of more or less sensational newspaper articles, but of serious speakers, such as Lord Cromer, Lord Curzon and others.

I recently asked the German Ambassador,[1] *what he thought of the attitude of the English parties during the election from the standpoint of German-English relations. He replied, that in spite of the hostile outcry against Germany which resounded round us, he never remembered a time when the relations between the two Governments had been better. If the Conservative Party should come into power, one should first see them at work. Meetings and press polemics, as at present, have naturally their bad features, but he did not propose to exaggerate their significance and was not unduly alarmed by them.*

My German colleague believes that the Conservative Party wishes to show that the country must be prepared for all emergencies—and this opinion is shared throughout the country. If England's influential personages were really pursuing ambitious or aggressive aims, they would take good care not to speak so loud of them. According to Count Metternich, it is all a matter of electioneering party manoeuvres, which, apart from the very much disputed question of Tariff Reform, has no fixed program. This is of course always a sign of weakness.

As regards myself, I fully share the point of view of my German colleague. *I even think, that the entire agitation does not go very far, since above all it is worked up by the speeches of a brilliantly popular and experienced but discontented party-leader—I mean Admiral Lord Charles Beresford. . . . .*

There scarcely exists any difference, between the views of the Conservatives and the Radicals, as regards foreign policy, and both parties are agreed as to the necessity of armaments.[2] *Pichon's view applies, however, to election time. Foreign policy is nothing more than an election catchword. That is my conception of the present anti-German agitation.*

[1] Count Metternich.
[2] A view completely sustained by the European War.

(608) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Dec.* 21, 1910-*Jan.* 3, 1911.

To-day I called on Sir Arthur Nicolson and asked him, whether he had any special information to give me prior to the departure of our courier.

Sir Arthur replied that no special matters were under discussion, nevertheless he regretted a certain nervousness at Paris, at any rate in the press and among the public. He told me that the Italian Ambassador had just been to see him, and appeared to attach great importance to certain articles in the "Daily News." These articles would seem to be very pro-German or rather anti-French.

Sir Arthur told the Ambassador that the "Daily News" was an organ of the Radical Party which, it is true, supports the Government, but which has no connection with the Cabinet, whose views by no means coincide with those of the party mentioned. Should a section of the Radical Party believe itself to be compelled, by one reason or another, to arraign itself against the French Government, this tendency has not a shadow of influence on the attitude of the British Government; the relations between the Governments of England and France are just as intimate as before; nothing has changed in the relations of perfect confidence between England and Russia. On the contrary, he believes that this entente is steadily growing firmer, which naturally does not exclude an improvement in the relations between Russia and Germany, and he at least would be satisfied if the same could be said of England and Germany; in short, this was nothing more than the usual nervousness of the Paris public and intrigues in the French press.

Continuing our conversation confidentially, Sir Arthur told me that to be sure he regards the tendency of the "Daily News" and various other papers as being inspired by the German press.

This latter, Sir Arthur told me, to-day unfortunately seeks to represent matters as if the entire political situation is now based on the arrangements arrived at between Russia and Germany, as well as on those which, it is alleged, will soon be concluded between England and Germany, whereby Germany is credited with the main rôle and France thrust wholly on one side. This awakens uneasiness at Paris and perhaps this is not wholly unintentional.

In London one is calmer, Sir Arthur concluded, but he wishes the St. Petersburg correspondent of the "Times" were more careful.

He has informed the whole world, that the Russian Government intends replying to a German note of the year 1907. I know nothing of this but in a serious paper one must say either more or nothing. *Sir Arthur added that the present tendencies of the Radical party in England would not last and that no importance can be attached to them. . . . .*

At the close of the conversation, Sir Arthur said that he had learnt with pleasure that you now appeared satisfied with the course of the negotiations at Teheran. He really believes that for a moment the impression prevailed at Constantinople, especially after the last British note, that Russia and England are contemplating a partition of Persia. These fears seem to be dispelled—Sir Arthur believes German diplomacy to have meddled in this affair, at least at the beginning.

(609) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 27, 1910-Jan. 9, 1911.*

As rumours are continuously recurring in the French press, referring to alleged results of the Potsdam meeting, Pichon has decided to postpone no longer his speech in Parliament. He will touch on France's relations to all the Powers, and, above all, he will emphasize the impregnability of the Franco-Russian Alliance, *as well as the utter confidence in our policy and the satisfaction with which France would welcome a possibility of preventing friction between Russia and Germany. Pichon is convinced that he can counterbalance, in this way, the reports mentioned above.*

(610) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 25, 1910-Jan. 7, 1911. No. 286.*

The "Evening Times," yesterday, published a telegram from St. Petersburg, containing the text of your draft of our agreement with Germany as to Persia and the Bagdad Railway.

(611) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Dec. 28, 1910-Jan. 10, 1911. No. 1880.*

We have now received the copy in question of the "Evening Times." May I ask you, to submit to Nicolson the request of the Russian Gov-

ernment to institute a careful investigation as to the source from which the editor could have received the text. We attach the greatest importance to this matter which touches both Russian and English interests.

(612) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 29, 1910-Jan. 11, 1911. No. 289.*

Your telegram No. 1880 received.

Nicolson is of your opinion that it is most important to discover the origin of this indiscretion. The Foreign Office is occupied with the question and will communicate the result to us. Nicolson does not believe the indiscretion to have been committed in London, as the text published here contains a slight addition to the wording communicated by you to the British Ambassador.

(613) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Jan. 2-15, 1911.*

Last Friday Nicolson reverted to the indiscretion [1] of the "Evening Times." He told me the Foreign Office had commenced investigations; he believes himself already able to assure me that no breach of confidence occurred in the Foreign Office. He made no surmises.

Cambon told me this morning that he had spoken to a journalist who is very well informed of all that concerns the press. All the leading papers are trying to explain the mystery but have not as yet been able to solve the riddle.

The "Evening Times" is quite a new concern. It is only been appearing since last summer. The editor is a certain Mr. Whatney, formerly collaborator to the "Daily Mail" and the "Standard." It has been proved that this paper maintains no correspondents of its own abroad. This leads to the supposition that the information was communicated in London. This is also the opinion held by Cambon's informant. *Thus it would resolve itself into an indiscretion committed either at the Foreign Office or at the Embassies either of Russia, France or Germany.*

Cambon does not share this view. He logically infers that we are all in the possession of the same text, *whereas the English translation contains an addition at the end of the first line of the fourth*

[1] Hardly an "indiscretion" from the journalistic angle.

Article. One must therefore assume that at St. Petersburg some one had come into possession of a wording which had later been changed, or at Berlin—of a modification to be proposed.

It is assumed by many in London that the German Government is the originator of the indiscretion, especially in view of its continuous contact with the press.

Neither I nor Cambon deem this possible. I cannot see what Germany could gain hereby. I find that the German press at least is somewhat disappointed; it regards this result of the Potsdam meeting as too modest in comparison with the wide horizon that appeared to be opened by Bethmann-Hollweg's speech. . . . .

Cambon tells me that Jaurés,[1] *like all socialists and extreme Radicals, is an opponent of the Alliance with Russia and is openly in favour of a rapprochement with Germany. The same may be said of the ultra-Radical party in London, the German influence extending to its organs, as for instance the "Daily News."* Certain agents are working on this ground in favour of Germany and against Russia. I hasten to add that they have no influence on the Government, which knows, better than all others, that the rumours floating in London of alleged negotiations between the London and Berlin Cabinets,—one even hears of an understanding having been already reached—possess no foundation whatsoever.

I am afraid the addition to the document published in its English translation by the "Evening Times" has caused more surprise here than can be good. Not a word has been said to me, but the difference in both wordings was noticed at once. I ask myself whether this uncertainty does not render the value of the document communicated by us to both Governments questionable to a certain degree and whether it would not be wise to give an explanation regarding this. *One must not allow doubts to arise as to our having communicated an incomplete document.*

(614) *The Same to* the *Same. Letter, January* 2-15, 1911.

I feel I must inform Your Excellency about the attitude taken at present by English public opinion, as to the relations between Russia and England.

[1] One of the leaders of the French Radicals; assassinated at the outbreak of the European War.

The "Observer," the most influential of the Sunday papers, has published a long, somewhat unclear and rather pessimistic article on England's position.

The main and ever-recurring theme is the following:

The Triple Entente exists; it has not ceased action, although it has received a blow. *The article professes to level no reproach at Russia for having come to an understanding with Germany on the Bagdad Railway, since the Anglo-Russian Convention contains no provision forbidding this, but it states that England has one defender less in a vital question of her policy.*

The more reserved articles of the "Times," without going so far as this, give on the whole the same impression. *The sagacity of the public, even of the best informed circles, has not been able to realize that, in reality, no agreement, relating to the Bagdad Railway, has been concluded between Russia and Germany*[1]*—a term covering the entire German concession, and that in the understanding in question, which relates to the Russian sphere of influence in Persia, the railway problems have only secondary importance.*

I believe this error to be the real cause of the uneasiness. And, unfortunately, the Ministerial speeches so far, both, that of Bethmann-Hollweg as that of Pichon, do not throw any light on this subject; they pass over it in silence.

I want to call your attention to this circumstance; I believe it would be well to fill up this gap.

I have been strengthened in this view by a conversation to-day with Cambon, who returned from Paris two days ago.

He, usually so well-informed on all affairs in Turkey and Asia Minor, appeared this time to be quite in the dark.

Like everybody else, he too, referred to the Russo-German agreement on the Bagdad Railway and observed that France and England would be quite isolated in future.

On my trying to enlighten him he asked me:

"What do you really understand under the term 'Bagdad Railway'?"

I gave him your definition: "As far as Bagdad."

He seemed surprised at this and only said:

[1] Such an agreement had been made at Potsdam. For a while it clouded the horizon of the Entente and gave Europe a short respite from incessant fear of war. The effect of the agreement was short-lived.

"But this is really most important."

I remembered the postscript to your private letter of December 1-14, and I read to him the sentence relevant to this subject.

He appeared to be most astonished:

"Nobody seems to have any idea of this and on reading the published document in this sense, it acquires a totally different meaning," he said.

I replied that Sir Arthur Nicolson, at any rate, was acquainted with the contents of this highly confidential letter.

"That is why," Cambon said to me, "I found him much calmer; I cannot conceal from you that this was not the case with him before my departure for Paris."

Cambon has also spoken to Chirol of the "Times"; he too is uneasy, does not see matters clearly and fears the work of the Radical Party in favour of Germany. I was surprised that Cambon, who, moreover, has not seen Iswolsky, was not better informed on the subject. I naturally refer solely to public opinion in this letter. I hope to see Sir Edward Grey before the departure of our courier and will send you an account of our conversation.

(615) *The Same to the Same. Letter, January* 4-17, 1911.

After a somewhat long absence, Sir Edward Grey this morning requested me to call on him. He received me with the statement that he wished to make clear to me England's standpoint in the question of the negotiations that had taken place at Potsdam between Your Excellency and the German Government.

He is afraid that England's position, in any future negotiations that may take place on the Bagdad Railway, is now considerably weakened.

He described in a few words, the course of the negotiations and reminded me of the "Negotiations of the Four," which we had agreed upon before the arrival of Emperor William at Windsor. This formula was confirmed at Windsor, at which time Baron Schön neither accepted nor rejected it, but it was soon afterwards declined at Berlin, in consequence of which the idea arose of separate negotiations, the final result of which was, however, to be determined by "all Four."

The negotiations between Cassel and Gwinner, last year, were carried on in this sense. The outcome of these negotiations between financiers was, for various reasons, not confirmed by the British Government, but the letter, in which Grey communicates the decision of the London Cabinet to Cassel's representative, points out that the British Government could not in any case come to a definite decision without having previously applied to France and Russia. Grey showed me this letter. The last paragraph confirmed what he had told me.

I replied that no communication of this nature had been made to me at the time, and that I, therefore, could not have transmitted it to the Russian Government. I added that I was well acquainted with the ideas on which Your Excellency based our present negotiations with Germany. *We had in reality negotiated in order to safeguard our interests in our sphere of interest in Persia, and in order to achieve this we had indeed given positive promises to Germany.* But the German project in its entire compass had not formed the subject of special negotiations: the term "Bagdad Railway" in the project communicated to the British Government only meant the line from Konia to Bagdad,—a line that, if not yet complete, has already been finished in part.

Sir Edward then resumed the conversation and said the short description he had just given me had no other purpose than to express his thoughts more lucidly, but that he would tell me, without hesitation, that our reading of the term "Bagdad Railway" was of the greatest importance, and that it would be important that our interpretation be plainly understood and accepted by Germany, and if possible find expression in the text of the agreement.

Grey then declared that England's position in her future negotiations with Germany is weakened in any case, as the latter has obtained two extremely important concessions from Russia:

1.) The Bagdad Railway has found an outlet in Northern Persia, a fact that offers great economic and financial advantages and is furthermore of incontestable political importance to Germany.

2.) Germany has obtained that Russia ceases her opposition on principle to the Bagdad project. Sir Edward regards this result as all the more important for Germany as hitherto the reverse was the case. Russia had in truth assisted in crippling Germany's efforts,

and the St. Petersburg Cabinet had for a long time maintained its standpoint, that the German project would be injurious to Russian interests; London did not take this standpoint so clearly, so that it happened on several occasions that the London Cabinet itself pointed out to us that, in the whole nature of things, we should not be able permanently to uphold such an opposition on principle.

These two points, according to Sir Edward, signify a great relief for Germany and render England's position more difficult in precisely the same degree.

After an interval Sir Edward said:

"If I have plainly explained our standpoint I must ask you to believe that I regard a perfectly open exchange of views between our two Governments as necessary, but in so doing, I wish to make neither reproaches, nor complaints. On the contrary, I wish to maintain our relations in the same degree of confidence and sincerity as hitherto. I go even further, I do not wish my words to prejudice the result of your negotiations with Germany. I hope these negotiations will lead to a result and I fear that, should this not be the case, the situation will become even more dangerous, to the disadvantage of both of us."

Sir Edward then summarised his statement and asked me to draw your attention to three points:

The importance to Germany of having received assurances from us concerning the linking-up of the railways in Persia. Then, he deems it extremely important that, should we connect Khanekin with a point in Northern Persia, whatever Germany's participation may be, the control and management of this branch line in our Persian sphere of interest should remain solely in Russian hands to the exclusion of every kind of German interference.

Sir Edward gave a reason for this. He said we must not forget the pan-Islam movement; Persia is Mohammedan, as is Afghanistan, and since both, Russia and England, possess numerous Mohammedan subjects, a Turkish army commanded by German officers, controlling a railway in Persia which is under German influence—would be a permanent danger, the importance of which must not be underrated.

Grey's third observation concerns the boundary line we have drawn for German enterprises. He fears the German Government may draw the conclusion therefrom that the enumeration of those

Persian districts, which interest us, excludes an interest on our part in the remaining Persian territory. This would be most disadvantageous to England.

Sir Edward trusts that you will not lose sight of these three points in your negotiations with Germany.

In conclusion, he told me, that it was not impossible that Germany will make proposals to the London Cabinet, and that Turkey will request the consent of the Powers to the four per cent Customs increase; he hopes to be able to assume that Russia has preserved complete freedom of action in this respect.

I replied that in case of negotiations respecting the entire Bagdad Railway with branch lines to the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, we would remain true to our obligations to England and France.

(616) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan.* 8-21, 1911. *No.* 4.

I learn from a trustworthy source, that in case of alterations being introduced in the draft of the German-Russian Agreements as communicated here by us, previous information is here expected, in order, if necessary, to be able to point to any detrimental effect on English interests in the sense of my letter of January 4-17.

(617) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Confidential Letter, Jan.* 14-27, 1911. *No.* 21.

Replying to your telegram No. 4, I request you to inform Grey that I shall not fail to keep him informed as to the course of our negotiations with Germany. I regard it, however, as absolutely necessary to preserve the character of strict secrecy for these negotiations. *To prevent the possibility of such unpleasant indiscretions, as the publication of the text of the prospective agreement with Germany, I shall in future confine myself to verbal communications and refrain from giving any written statements.*

(618) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Personal Confidential Letter, Jan.* 14-27, 1911.

The King [1] yesterday honoured me at Windsor by a most confidential conversation bearing on two questions which are of like

[1] George V.

importance to both countries: the Bagdad Railway and the project of a connection between the Caucasian and the Indian railways.

The King is of the same opinion as Grey, with regard to the first question, and I will restrict myself to a few observations.

Aided by a small map, the King showed me that the Bagdad Railway is only completed from Konia to Bulgurlu[1]; work has of course been commenced on several sections beyond, but the Taurus offered great technical difficulties; up to now the entire enterprise most probably does not command sufficient means to extend beyond El-Halif.

The King inferred therefrom that the whole affair was not as far as had been stated, and that we had plenty of time before us. This circumstance renders it in his opinion all the more necessary to formulate the text of the proposed understanding between Germany and ourselves as clearly as possible, especially the meaning with which we invest the words "Bagdad Line," that is, "up to Bagdad." I remarked to the King that we should undoubtedly emphasize this clearly.

The King replied that this question may, perhaps, only come up for discussion in a few years' time, and should it then be necessary to choose between a less clear official document and a perfectly clear statement, it is to be feared that the document and not the statement would be valid; at any rate the document might give rise to an interpretation which could produce a situation dangerous to all Powers.

The King said he was speaking quite openly in the spirit and in the interests of our Entente to which he will adhere more closely than ever and which he considers to be the basis of the world's peace; he is determined to take account of Russia's interests in all these questions and is convinced that our Emperor is animated by the same feelings.

The King laid stress on the extraordinary importance of this question for England.

The King then discussed our obligation to connect Khanekin with Teheran or another place in North Persia. He addressed the following questions to me:

In case Russia builds a railway in the direction of the Caspian Sea with the intention of linking up the Russian lines with the

[1] Points on the Anatolian high-plateau; at the latter the railroad enters the Taurus mountains and presented many great engineering problems.

Indian, is Russia under the obligation to connect this line with Khanekin also?

I replied that I could give no direct answer, but that I considered it probable. Besides, the negotiations had not yet been concluded.

The King replied that this circumstance was of the greatest importance; true, it was a matter of a railroad in the Russian sphere of influence, but this question is fraught with extraordinary strategic importance for England and, above all, he said, it was a question of the control of the railway to Teheran or to another place in North Persia. Russia's control is a guarantee for England—Germany's control a danger.

The King dwelt on these considerations. He was thinking more than ever of the important results which a connection between the Russian and Indian railways must have; he would exercise all his influence in favour of this project and he sees in this the solution of many a difficulty caused by the Bagdad Railway, especially if the above mentioned scheme could be brought to a speedy solution.

The King told me he believes that he is in a position to know that the project of a trans-Persian railway is regarded at Berlin with extraordinary scepticism. It is believed there that the mutual confidence between Russia and England will not go so far as this. This is a mistake, the King said, and we must prove it.[1]

I replied that our Emperor favoured our project just as the King does; that he, too, discerned therein a strengthening of our entente; I added, however, that we must not conceal from ourselves that the plan would have to overcome great financial difficulties. *The King hereupon returned with animation that, should Russia and England really desire to build the railway, the money would have to be found.*

Like Sir Edward Grey, the King also brought this conversation to a close by observing that, despite the doubts he had confided to me, he not only warmly desired the conclusion of our negotiations with Germany, but was even convinced that such a conclusion was to England's interest.

I asked the King whether I might communicate this conversation to you. He replied that he authorised me to do so.

[1] The very opposite is proven by the documents relating to Persia's division, which see.

(619) *The Same to the Same. Private Letter, Feb.* 1-14, 1911.

My letter of January 14-27, dealing with my visit to Windsor, was already written when I received your private communication of January 12-25, and it is to serve you as an introduction to this letter. I shall reply to your letter point by point but will commence with the last:

Buchanan has spoken to you in confidence concerning Kühlmann's activity here. The communication is confidential,—to a certain degree. Mr. von Kühlmann does indeed keep permanently in touch with the editorial offices of the newspapers here, but he openly confesses that he wishes to prepare public opinion for the German proposals shortly to be expected. Personally, I have no doubt whatsoever that they concern an *entente générale,* beginning with Persia.

As for the British Government, it has been expecting these proposals since your return from Potsdam and your conversations with O'Beirne and Buchanan. During my first meetings with Grey and Nicolson I was immediately told that:

"Nothing has come as yet, we have received nothing so far."

Moreover, the London Cabinet has been long prepared. The trend of German policy had become clear to me since the *entrevues* in London and Kronberg. Already at the time of your stay at Rome, I constantly pointed to this in my reports. The basic idea of this policy is to be found in the words addressed to Hardinge by Emperor William: *"the two decisive factors in this world are the German Army and the British Navy."* Windsor, Highcliffe are further stages. I will not here attempt to clear up the mystery of the "Daily Telegraph."[1] *But it is not to be denied: it is the appeal of a mighty sovereign to the British nation. The form of procedure may not have been a happy one—but the essence of the matter is clear.*

And what was England's reply: "We are bound and can only negotiate 'all four.'" This was once more said to Cassel, and to Gwinner, only recently.

Personally, I am firmly convinced that the London Cabinet will uphold this standpoint also in the future, so long as the Anglo-Russian Entente will exist,—but exist in its full scope. *It must be*

[1] The emperor's famous interview with Dr. Dillon, correspondent of that paper.

the basis of British policy as a whole from Morocco to China. Such is the belief of the King, Grey, Asquith, Balfour, Lansdowne, Nicolson and Hardinge. Nothing less: the maintenance of peace between the two great nations in Asia and the protection of their mutual interests. As soon as the Entente is confined to certain questions, England will see herself forced to consider the German wishes relating to concessions and the partition of spheres of influence,—*this will, step by step, annul our entente, and the Anglo-German understanding will then assume a general character, for such a combination possesses a very fascinating feature for England: the possibility of limiting her armaments. Such an Entente will certainly have to overcome a great many difficulties,—the beginning, above all, will be arduous, but once under way, it will go the whole length. And the isolation of Russia will be the inevitable result. I am aware that I am repeating myself but the gravity of the situation forces me to express my opinion frankly and openly.*

You say in your letter: "Distrust as to our relations to England and France." So far as France is concerned, you are naturally better informed than I am. I wish merely to remark that Pichon's speech contains a gap:[1] he had mentioned the relations of France to Russia, and the relations of France to England, but not a combination of the three Powers. This caused a very painful impression here, whilst it pleased Germany, as I see from the papers.

Now as to London. Perfect confidence is felt here as to the sincerity of our Emperor and consequently of his Ministers as well. It is feared, however, that Germany's position is so strong that she will be able to gain the greatest advantages in her negotiations with us—advantages which would strike at the very root of the Anglo-Russian Entente; Germany's power reposes in the fact that Russia's negotiations with her must now necessarily be carried to a conclusion, namely, with a view to the future peaceful relations of the Powers to one another. The King and Grey have also told me this and they were perfectly sincere in declaring that they wished our negotiations to be concluded. Grey fears a failure, but he asks himself what price will have to be paid?

The frankness with which you spoke to O'Beirne and Buchanan both, before and after Potsdam, has been fully appreciated here.

[1] M. Pichon had portrayed the situation as it actually was.

Since then, however, it has been feared, that you—pray excuse the expression—have been hard pushed. . . . .

You have asked me to communicate the gist of the whole matter to Grey and Nicolson, to lead them back to the real point—the four per cent Customs increase.[1]

This I have already done and successfully, too, as my reports show. For Grey himself admits that this is the one point concerning which he reckons on our support; the remainder are friendly commentaries. But his tone more than his words, expressed his regret. . . . .

Your letter gives me the possibility of completely reassuring Grey on the subject of the Customs increase,—but nothing more. And I need more to be able to assume that the impending Anglo-German negotiations will not harm us.

I will briefly summarise:

Hitherto no proposals have been made on the German side. It is not believed in press-circles here that they are imminent. Germany, apparently, intends first to bring the negotiations with us to a close in order then to be able to say to England: This is how we stand with Russia. The British Ministers have confidence in your intentions, but these do not coincide with the English standpoint. *It is a question,*—pardon me—*of the degree of the sentiment of solidarity.*

My responsibility towards the Emperor and the country forces me to speak so plainly on this important question.

I will conclude with another question, which has no such far-reaching importance; it refers to your letter No. 21. A statement of this kind on my part would be ill-received here and cloud our good relations. I shall therefore await further instructions. *The circumstance, that the version published here does not precisely correspond with the text submitted by me, ought to clear the Foreign Office of every vestige of suspicion. The King and Grey would feel greatly hurt. I believe it would be well if you kept Buchanan always fully informed; all the more so as we could only in such case count on a similar frankness on the part of England in her negotiations with Germany.*

[1] An attempt at obstruction; despite the Russo-German understanding in regard to the Bagdad railroad question.

(620) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, Jan. 20-Feb. 2, 1911.*

I have as yet not written you anything on the question of the fortification of Flushing, which has caused such great excitement in the French Press, since I wished first of all to obtain a clear picture of all the numerous rumours and to ascertain the attitude of the French Government in this question.

Upon reading the declaration of Pichon in Parliament, in answer to the interpellation of the well-known chauvinist De la Fosse, I felt convinced that the French Foreign Minister had been surprised and that his statements would appear later on far too categorical.

The day after this declaration, Pichon considerably weakened the significance of his statements in an interview with a Dutch correspondent. Hereupon, he considered it necessary to send a circular telegram to the French representatives accredited to the Signatory Powers of the Treaty of 1839, *in which the exact meaning of his speech is explained.* I did not see the text of this telegram, but Pichon communicated its contents to me.

The idea of an intervention in the question of the fortification of Flushing is denied, and it is emphasized that in Parliament he did not speak of negotiations, but of "friendly conversations" between the Powers Guaranteeing the Neutrality of Belgium.

From various conversations which I had with Pichon, I conclude that he is not particularly worried over this question and that he does not wish to attach too much significance to it. Up to now he has not been able to examine the legal side of it. *It is his personal opinion, however, that Holland has the indisputable right of fortifying the mouth of the Scheldt. On the other hand, neither Pichon nor the French Government doubt, that the idea of the fortifications originated in Germany and that the Dutch Government acts, if not in virtue of a direct convention, then, in fear for the independence of Holland in case of a European war. If Pichon and his colleagues retain their composure, it is due to the fact that the conviction prevails here that Germany, in a new Franco-German war, would in any case violate Belgian neutrality.*[1] For this reason, the

[1] The Belgian government had already reached an understanding with the French and British general staffs and governments, having been whipped into

fortification of Flushing is considered a less important detail of the general German plan of attack upon France. *In spite of this, as I have learnt, the newspaper campaign, which was first taken up by certain Belgian newspapers, was conducted with French money and under secret participation of the French military attaché in Belgium in the hope of frustrating in this indirect manner the execution of the Dutch plan.* **So far as I am able to judge, one still reckons here on the possibility of a success of the press campaign and hopes that Holland, even though she does not fully give up her plan, will nevertheless postpone or alter it.**

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line by means of the press campaign related to the "Congo Atrocities," the details of which were invented to within 95 per cent. of their total. The true inwardness of this campaign was fully understood by the government of the Netherlands and the Dutch general staff was in the possession of information of the military "surveys" that were being made in Belgium, jointly by Belgian, French and British officers. The Dutch government, moreover, had no illusions on the position of Belgium in case of a war between the Triple Alliance and Triple Entente, be this in a military sense, so far as invasion by Germany was concerned, or in a political sense, in regard to Belgium's leaning towards the Entente. The Dutch general staff had to count upon Antwerp being made the objective of a German invasion, and it had to consider military counter-measures in the same direction or locality by the forces of the Entente. These very problems reached their culmination during the siege and taking of Antwerp, in October of 1914, when the governments of Great Britain, France and Russia actually considered forcing the Scheldt, to bring relief to Antwerp, but desisted finally, because the Dutch government declared itself by rushing all of its mobilized troops to the mouth of the river. London, Paris and Petrograd did not urge the point after that—principally because the case of Belgium's invasion by Germany would have ceased to be good propaganda material if Holland had been subjected to a like measure by the Entente.

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ENTENTE VERSUS GERMANY IN SOUTHWEST ASIA

(January—September 1911)

(621) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Jan. 22-Feb. 4, 1911. No. 93.*

I refer to the telegram from our Ambassador at Paris, No. 6.

The British Ambassador here told me the same as Pichon, pointing out that *England was ready to grant us financial support in the construction of the Khanekin-Teheran line, in order to prevent our building this railway in conjunction with Germany.* At Potsdam, and also from my conversations with the German Ambassador here, I gained the impression that Germany considers the Khanekin-Teheran line as absolutely necessary and that she would, in one way or another, insist on the construction of this line. I personally believe that, perhaps, Germany foresees England's invincible opposition and therefore renounces the plan of continuing the Bagdad Railway to the Persian Gulf and will instead of this direct the main-line towards Persia.

Under these circumstances it is most important for us to keep the Khanekin-Teheran line in our hands. In this case we must attract English and French capital; the proposals of Pichon and Buchanan are advantageous to us. Will you please determine the conditions upon which English finance would participate?

(622) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 22-Feb. 4, 1911. No. 94.*

Our Ambassador at Paris telegraphs, sub No. 6:

"Pichon is extremely alarmed by a report from Louis to the effect that it would appear from a conversation with you that an

important alteration of the original Russo-German draft is being contemplated: you were inclined to build the Teheran-Khanekin Railway together with Germany, on the condition that the control of the line and a 60 per cent share be assured to us.

"Pichon is convinced that the admission of Germany into our Persian sphere of influence,—whilst France for our sake has retired from all activity in that country, as for instance in the question of the foreign advisers,—would call forth very vigorous attacks on his policy in France and might be interpreted as a separation on our part from the Triple Entente. He is also convinced that this plan would be most unpleasant to England."

(623) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 22-Feb.* 4, 1911. *No.* 95.

Our Ambassador at Paris telegraphs in continuation of his telegram No. 6, that Pichon expressed his personal opinion to the effect that, in order to meet the difficulties mentioned, one might, perhaps, give the Teheran-Khanekin line an international, instead of a Russo-German, character. Russia participating in the enterprise conjointly with England, France and Germany, the first-mentioned to have a preferential position. This proposal seems all the more natural to him, as it will be necessary, in any case, to approach French and English capital. Pichon hardly believes that any protests would be raised on the part of Germany. The standpoint of the British Cabinet is unknown to him.

(624) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Jan. 24-Feb.* 6, 1911. *No.* 16.

Your telegrams Nos. 93, 94 and 95 received.

Replying to your question at the close of telegram No. 93, Nicolson tells me that Buchanan's communication must be regarded as a concrete proposal made by the British Government, to take part with English capital in the construction of the Khanekin-Teheran line—either with Russia and England alone, in which case, however, England could not raise the entire capital, or with Russia, England, France and Germany conjointly, as France proposed, and naturally under exclusively Russian control. Nicolson tells me there is a third solution, which the British Government would have

preferred, namely that Russia undertake the enterprise alone within her sphere of interest, a solution which, unfortunately, seems to have been rejected in the course of your conversation with Buchanan. Nicolson added that it was impossible for him to-day to give to us the extent and conditions of English participation, as he had no figures at his disposal.

(625) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 24-Feb. 6, 1911. No. 17.*

Continuation of my telegram No. 16.

Nicolson continued the conversation confidentially, and reverted to the formula which was referred to in your conversation with Buchanan: Russia undertakes to construct the Teheran-Khanekin line but reserves the sole right to exercise control, and to determine the participation of other Powers in this enterprise. He regards this formula as an especially happy one. *He did not conceal from me, that the London Cabinet considered the admission of German interests into our zone as giving cause for anxiety, but he admits that the participation of France must entail that of Germany. Regarding the cession of the line to Germany alone, Nicolson declared that the British nation would hold the Cabinet responsible for this.* In order to render possible the Anglo-Russian Convention, England had renounced all advantages in the Russian sphere of interest and could not now permit that we grant Germany a concession which would be regarded here as dangerous to England's vital interests. Nicolson is very disturbed and I do not think he is in error.

(626) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 24-Feb. 6, 1911. No. 19.*

I have had a short casual conversation with the German Ambassador here, in the course of which he told me that he considers the allusions in Pichon's speech, as to confidential communications having been made by the Russian Government, to be pure boasting: a new demonstration on the part of the Triple Entente would, however, call forth serious difficulties.

(627) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 25-Feb. 7, 1911. No. 20.*

Cambon yesterday called upon Nicolson immediately after I had done so. He told me he was surprised at Nicolson's uneasiness

and how, again and again, he had pointed to the extraordinary importance of the Teheran-Khanekin line to the Entente, *as the Entente was principally based on a policy in Persia.* He again reverted to the formula mentioned in my telegram No. 17. A combination of Four, including Germany, is also being considered here, but only in case of emergency. No doubt exists for me, that this question has become the pivot of the political situation, and that England attributes to it such great importance, that in case we cede the line to Germany, England would alter her entire policy. Nicolson's anxiety has a personal side, since both, Grey and he, gave guarantees on the occasion of general anxiety of public opinion, following the Potsdam meeting, *that you had made no promises at Potsdam which ran counter to British interests. Nicolson told Cambon, that if no way out could be found, this would mean the collapse of the entire British policy of the last six years.* Nevertheless, he admits that our negotiations with Germany must lead to some result, and he still hopes that this may be achieved without any damage to the Entente; what he fears is not so much the point of departure, as the further development of our negotiations with Germany.

(628) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 27-Feb. 9, 1911. No. 23.*

Personal. Strictly confidential.

I learn from a reliable source that, although the death of his brother naturally meant a severe blow to Grey, this misfortune is not the sole reason for his absence at present. *Our late decisions concerning Persia have played a considerable part in this, and great efforts were necessary to dissuade him from his original intention of tendering his resignation and withdrawing from public life. Our attitude in the railway question has shaken his inner conviction that Russia still possesses full liberty of action in her sphere of interest, and he believes that England should first have been asked in so important a matter. As he possesses no document, on which he could have supported himself officially, he regarded his resignation as the only way out.* He has now renounced this idea, but the impression produced on Grey proves the great importance which England, chiefly for strategic reasons, attaches to Germany's progress in these regions. *Nothing of this has been made known, neither to the general public,*

nor to the press. But it is certain that public opinion in England, basing itself less on the letter, than on the spirit, of our later agreements as to the Bagdad Railway, considered our mutual interests in this part of the East to be closer united even than during the annexation crisis in the Balkans. *Should we be unable to prevent a disillusion of this nature, this would lead to very serious consequences.*

Some time ago, Grey expressed a lively desire to speak to you personally. I told him I believed that you would come here in the spring.

(629) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Jan. 28-Feb. 10, 1911. No. 128.*

Your telegrams Nos. 22 and 23 received.

The nervousness of the English is surprising. The London Cabinet was already aware last October, that, in the negotiations about to take place with Germany, the principal subject to be discussed would be a railway from Khanekin to Teheran. Negotiations to this effect are still taking place, but no decisions have been reached. *We, by no means, entertain the idea to leave this line to Germany, and we, likewise, do not believe that a participation of German capital, or even an internationalisation of the enterprise, will take place. We are only debating the question whether, and under what conditions, French and English capital could participate; the control of the entire enterprise naturally being reserved to us.* I shall speak in this sense to Buchanan who has hitherto received all my communications very calmly, and I hope that his reports will also have a soothing effect in London. We must avoid reverting too frequently to this subject before a definite decision has been reached.

(630) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Jan. 29-Feb. 11, 1911. No. 25.*

Your telegram No. 128 received.

I have not seen Nicolson since our last meeting. I have, however, just spoken to Cambon, who told me, that the last telegram from Buchanan had really converted Nicolson, and that the same was the case at Paris. They have been quieted chiefly by the statement made by you to the French Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg, that you possess freedom of action in connection with

Germany and that you command the situation in case of English and French participation.

(631) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Jan. 29-Feb 11, 1911. No. 133.*

Your telegrams Nos. 16 and 17 received.

A special Ministerial Council has examined the question of participation of British and French capital in the construction of the Khanekin-Teheran line, and it has been decided that, in order to prevent this line exercising an injurious influence on our commerce, it is necessary to build a new line right to the centre of Persia, either connecting Teheran with the net of Russian railways, or with a Persian port on the Caspian Sea. This can be effected only with the help of foreign capital, and we should therefore like to know whether we could count upon France and England financing this new railway? We must take public opinion here into consideration, which insists on our reaching Teheran before the Teheran-Khanekin Railway, which is so detrimental to us, be completed; it is even thought better to leave the latter to Germany, in case of emergency.

May I request you to let us have a reply before Tuesday next if possible?

(632) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Jan. 30-Feb. 12, 1911. No. 26.*

Your telegram No. 133 received.

I shall not be able to speak to Nicolson before Monday and therefore do not believe that an official reply of the British Government can be given in time. I do not foresee any objections on principle. *It must not be forgotten, however, that Government influence on financial circles here is even more indirect than at Paris.*[1] The Government has apparently made enquiries concerning the Khanekin-Teheran line. Our new enquiry comes as a surprise to the Government; two circumstances which will hardly render it possible for the London Cabinet to assume an immediate obligation.

[1] Proposed foreign loans in France depend for quotation on the Exchange upon the consent of the government.

(633) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan.* 31-*Feb.* 13, 1911. *No. 27.*

Nicolson tells me, that he is very well satisfied with Buchanan's last telegram which has led to a clearing-up of the situation.

(634) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 2-15, 1911. *No. 32.*

Grey takes full account of the importance which a railway from Teheran to the North possesses for Russia, but does not believe that English capital will take part in this enterprise without a guarantee from the Russian Government. As soon as the construction of the Khanekin-Teheran line seemed to be assured, the Foreign Office examined its importance for British trade in the South, and the building of a railway from the Persian Gulf was discussed, the direction of this line not being defined.

On this occasion, he had come to the conviction that no English capital could be found for such a line without a Government guarantee being forthcoming, and he met with the same aversion in Parliamentary circles as you encountered in the Duma. Grey infers from this that if English capital is not inclined to support British interests in the South, it will be still less inclined to do this for Russian interests in the North.

(635) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 4-17, 1911. *No. 37.*

Grey has shown me in confidence the copy of a telegram from Buchanan, dated February 16, and the substance of his reply.

1. *The British Government shares the opinion that a rupture of our negotiations with Germany, in their present stage, would be disastrous from a political point of view.*[1]

2. The Russian Government is itself able to judge better than all others how disadvantageous it would be to leave the Khanekin-Teheran line to Germany. Should Russia believe that this is not contrary to her interests, then England need not insist upon her objections, if only the Russian Government retain its freedom of action regarding the other questions connected with the Anglo-Russian Convention.

[1] Sazonoff proposed to disregard the result of the Potsdam meeting.

3. Without a Government guarantee, the participation of British capital in Persian railway lines will meet with insurmountable difficulties.

4. As to a British line in Southern Persia, the English plans, regarding the Gulf sector of the Bagdad Railway, are not yet decided upon.

But even if this railway were to be constructed, British interests are bound to become dependent on the influence of Germany on the Bagdad-Khanekin railway, the more so because German influence would be able to extend as far as Teheran. Thus the British Government is forced to think of other lines which would guarantee equal advantages. In any case, England is considering the question of a railroad in Southern Persia in order to prevent it from falling into other hands.

(636) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 4-17, 1911. *No.* 38.

Personal. The decision, negative in a double respect, arrived at by our Ministerial Council, as reported by Buchanan in his telegram, is bound to lead to a dead point, *because our political interests are inconsistent with the interests of our Treasury.* At all events it seems inadmissible to me that we should abandon the railway scheme and renounce all political influence in the North of Persia in favour of Germany; but to prevent this, the Ministerial Council grants us but one single means of protecting our interests—a guarantee on the part of our Government to be replaced by a guarantee on the part of England.

Such an attitude, it appears to me, precludes the possibility of a satisfactory solution. Would it not be possible for the Ministerial Council, to modify its decisions in view of the extraordinary importance of the political interests at stake, *and leave open to us the future possibility of being in a position to apply at Teheran for both concessions, without touching upon the question of the participation of the other Powers?* The financial side of the question can then be solved later. Such a course would accord with the obligations undertaken by us towards Germany and would, at the same time, satisfy the desires of Russian public opinion with regard to our influence in the North of Persia. To me the fact seems incon-

trovertible, that the promise to connect Khanekin with Teheran necessarily presupposes a Government guarantee, if not direct Russian participation.

(637) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Feb.* 4-17, 1911. *No.* 155.

I request you to let us know, as quickly as possible, whether the English will not provide funds without a Russian Government guarantee for the line from Teheran to the North only, or whether this also refers to the line Teheran-Khanekin.

(638) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb.* 5-18, 1911. *No.* 39.

Your telegram No. 155 received.

I saw Grey this morning. *English capital will participate, neither in the line Teheran-Khanekin, nor in the Teheran-North Persian line, without the guarantee of the Russian Government.* A guarantee of the British Government is out of the question; Parliament would refuse its consent. Moreover, Grey's telegram to Buchanan leaves no doubt in that respect.

(639) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 5-18, 1911. *No.* 40.

It still appears to me that, if we ask at Teheran for a concession for the Khanekin-Teheran line and reply to Germany in this sense, the decision of our Ministerial Council would be fulfilled. *We are merely securing for ourselves a privilege, which would postpone the difficulty for quite a number of years without our undertaking any financial obligations.*[1] By that time it should be possible to find an international combination. In case of necessity, there still remains our renunciation in favour of Germany, but only in the extremest necessity, not now. The same consideration applies to the line from Teheran to the North. In the latter case, however, Russian participation seems imperative, because Russian interests are at stake. *But we would have gained time.*

[1] A time-honored expedient of diplomacy.

(640) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Feb.* 10-23, 1911. *No.* 182.

The British Ambassador here has informed me that England intends to construct a railway from Mohammerah to Khoramabad near the boundary of our Persian sphere of interest. *I replied to the effect that such a railway would be directly harmful to our economic interests and would arouse grave misgivings in Russia.*

(641) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, Feb.* 13-26, 1911.

I have received your telegram, No. 182.

Sir G. Buchanan on his part has sent a report here of his conversation with you. I shall not fail to act on the lines indicated by you to the British Ambassador. I do not know whether the British Government has already come to a definite decision in this matter. I believe that a great deal will depend on the result of the impending negotiations between England and Turkey and later on probably between England and Germany regarding the Gulf sector of the Bagdad Railway.

Our agreement with Germany on the Khanekin-Teheran line will also be a factor—in other words it is a question of the entire Bagdad to Teheran line. I incline to the view that England will endeavour to secure concessions in South Persia, in order, as Sir Edward says, to prevent these falling into the hands of any other Power later on; the construction itself will depend on circumstances.[1]

I must remark, however, that the pressure exerted by public opinion on the British Government is growing steadily, in order to secure a more effectual protection of English commercial interests in these districts.

So long as Persia was a closed territory, the question was never brought forward, but the era of concessions and enterprise has now dawned. It seems hardly likely to me, that England, with all her manifold interests, could remain behind. This was also my impression on reading the telegram from our Consul-General at Calcutta. *No doubt can exist but that our railway line in the North,*

[1] Of all the railroad concessions obtained by Great Britain in the course of years in Southwest Asia not a single foot was ever laid down.

which must sooner or later lead to a more extensive network of railways, represents the beginning of the partition of Persia and necessarily leads to the construction of English lines in South Persia; I can conceive that these railways will pass into English hands at the Indian frontier and later on perhaps be connected with our railways at a point not yet determined. For these reasons I cannot understand why such railway constructions meet with so little approval with us, although I must admit the correctness of the financial considerations. I fear, however, that we are losing time, and I believe we should at least secure the concessions for ourselves.

Under these circumstances, I do not believe that we shall succeed in inducing the British Government to waive its intentions.

I say all this, because I regard it as my duty to give you full information with respect to the English standpoint.

I do not believe that we should be justified in basing a protest against the English scheme on the Anglo-Russian Convention, just as England could not protest against our line leading to Teheran.

The Anglo-Russian Convention, the wording of which was intentionally so formulated as to render protests by other nations impossible, aimed—I do not believe that this can be controverted—*at the purpose which has so frequently been revealed, namely that of uniting our efforts to prevent Germany from obtaining a foothold in Persia. . . . .*

What Grey told us, regarding the linking up of Khanekin with Teheran, touches on a question which appears to me extraordinarily important,—he told us that the Russian understanding with Germany has weakened his position, should he have to negotiate with Germany with respect to the Bagdad Railway. *He avers that German enterprise has secured an outlet, which now renders it independent of English consent; besides this, England can no longer rely on Russia's opposition to the Bagdad Railway as a matter of principle.* France's opposition was from the very beginning not very categorical. Sir Edward Grey therefore finds that England is now far more isolated in this question than before.

(642) *The Same to the Same. Letter, March* 1-14, 1911.

Grey requested me to-day to call upon him. He told me that he had been so busy of late, owing to Asquith's [1] absence, that it had

[1] British Premier.

not been possible for him to see me, but he wished to inform me, without delay, that the British Government had received formal proposals from Constantinople concerning the railway line between Bagdad and the Persian Gulf.

These proposals aim at internationalising this part of the Bagdad Railway, Germany, England and France each participating with 20 per-cent and Turkey with 40 per-cent. The line would end at Koweit, which must be treated as Turkish territory.

Sir Edward immediately told me, that the British Government would not accept this proposal; he had, however, for the present, confined himself to stating that the Turkish proposals would be taken into consideration. Speaking to me, the Minister added nothing more; only in connection with Koweit he said, that England was bound by her understanding with the Sheik,[1] which obliged her to maintain the present situation.

Sir Edward requested me to treat this information as confidential; he had made a similar statement to the French Ambassador.

I need hardly observe, that the new Turkish communications will not promote a solution of the question and that the examination of the Turkish proposals, according to the English Secretary of State, is only a pure formality in order not to break off the negotiations by a direct refusal.[2]

(643) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb.* 18-*March* 3, 1911. *No.* 26.

After Cruppi, I received a visit from the new Naval Minister Delcassé, the most prominent member of the Cabinet whose return to power has aroused such lively discussion in the European press. Delcassé repeated to me everything that Cruppi had said regarding the unshakeable nature of the foreign policy of France and the radical tendencies wrongly attributed to the Cabinet. *In addition to this, he declared to me, that his entrance into the Cabinet formed the guarantee that special care would be devoted to the military power of France. His first task would be the creation of a strong fleet, and he hopes to be able to have at his disposal six new armoured*

[1] An Arab chieftain owing allegiance to the Ottoman government and not qualified to make "understandings" with Great Britain which either "bound" or "obliged" Grey.

[2] The documents continue with No. 646.

vessels not later than August or September. He also guarantees that the new Cabinet will redouble its efforts regarding the land forces. It is not at all his intention to exceed the competency of his office, and to arouse suspicion on the part of Germany, yet he has assured me, that he, on his part, will do everything in order to make the relations between France and Russia as close as possible, and he has begged me to lay his sentiments of sincere devotion to Russia at the foot of the throne.[1] On leaving me, Delcassé drove to pay a visit to the German Ambassador.

(644) *The Same to the Same. Letter, March* 1-14, 1911.

. . . . With regard to foreign relations, I have recently sent you a brief report regarding the statements made to me by Cruppi and Delcassé. Since then, I have also had long conversations with Monis and Caillaux. They have all assured me of the unshakeable firmness of France's Foreign Policy, and of the absolute sincerity of the new Government regarding the alliance with Russia.[2] Even though a certain criticism of Pichon's policy could be felt, *it was merely in the sense of the newspaper articles in which the predecessor of Cruppi was accused of not having made the most of the Triple Entente for the advancement of the interests of France, Russia and England. Although Delcassé emphasized, that he did not wish to exceed the competency of the Ministry of the Navy, it is nevertheless assumed that he will influence the activity of Cruppi, since the latter has little experience in foreign questions. Delcassé has sought to convince me that the new Government will not only not permit any weakening of the military power of France, but will develop the land and naval forces to a still higher efficiency.* Delcassé explained to me that, even though civilians were once more placed in control of the two military departments, the former organisation of the higher military offices as introduced by General Brienne and Admiral Boué, would be retained in future. With special reference to the fleet, his, Delcassé's, appointment as Naval Minister was a guarantee that particular importance was attached to it and he hopes to have the new

[1] Strong language for a quasi-radical.
[2] Misgivings were due to the formation of a ministry of men who had marched under the socialist and radical standards.

squadron of battle-ships in commission not later than August or September.

(645) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 18-*March* 3, 1911.

The new French Minister of Foreign Affairs came to see me, to-day, immediately after his appointment, and before he had paid any other visits, *and assured me, in the most categorical form, that, in the matter of foreign affairs, the new Government would inflexibly pursue the policy of the former Cabinet, and that he himself would devote all his efforts to preserve and to further the close relations of friendship and alliance between France and Russia.* In a long conversation, he sought to refute the radical tendencies attributed to the new Cabinet and declared that he and his colleagues set order at home, and the external Power of France, above everything else. The new Cabinet is severely criticised in intelligent and moderate circles; personally Cruppi made a very good impression upon me.

(646) *The Same to the Same. Letter, March* 3-16, 1911.

The new French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cruppi, has not yet sufficiently acquainted himself with current business, to be able to enter upon an exchange of opinions with me as to the questions that interest us. Especially in the matter of the Bagdad Railway, and the construction of railways in Asia Minor in general, he, as yet, has no clear insight. Bompard [1] arrived here, the other day, in order to report explicitly on these questions. Furthermore, Cruppi has summoned the two brothers Cambon [2] to Paris, and the Minister thinks he cannot begin the discussions with me until he has exchanged views with them. *I, on my part, reminded him, that his predecessor had promised to keep me constantly informed, and not to undertake anything without a previous exchange of opinions with us.* Cruppi renewed this promise with the greatest willingness, and declared that he would meet me as soon as he had discussed matters with the two brothers Cambon.

[1] French Ambassador at Constantinople.
[2] Paul and Jules, French ambassadors at London and Berlin, respectively.

In spite of Cruppi's evident desire not to enter more closely into the questions raised by me, I took this opportunity of correcting the impression, he had evidently gained from various newspapers, especially English ones, of the meeting at Potsdam. These papers present this event as if Russia had deserted England and France in the Bagdad question, and for this had been granted concessions in Persia by Germany—through which the position of the London and Paris Cabinets had become much more difficult.

I explained to Cruppi that our proposed agreement with Germany, regarding Persia, in no wise anticipates the solution of the Bagdad-Khanekin question, no more than of all other questions connected with the Bagdad enterprise. Our promise, no longer to oppose the participation of foreign capital in the Bagdad scheme, does not only not signify any weakening of the English and French positions, but, on the contrary, takes account of the constant complaints made against us by English and French financiers. *In conclusion I once again emphasized our lively hope that the Paris Cabinet will take no step without consulting us beforehand.*

(647) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 9-22, 1911. *No.* 31.

I refer to my letter of March 3rd.

After his interview with the brothers Cambon, Cruppi appointed next Saturday for an interview with me. In all probability the question of the Bagdad Railway will be discussed. I urgently beg to be instructed as to whether I may officially confirm the idea mentioned in my letter, viz: *That, by the conclusion of an agreement with Germany, we in no wise separate ourselves from France and England and that we have not anticipated any important decisions. May I, in particular, state that we have retained a free hand in the matter of the four per cent increase in the customs duties, and that we are free to make our consent subject to one or another condition, according to agreement with France and England? Finally, if we should speak of an eventual internationalisation of the Bagdad-Persian Gulf Railway, may I insist on our participation, even if it be only a fictitious one, because by that means we should secure predominance to the group of the three Entente Powers?*

(648) *Neratoff, Acting Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, March* 10-23, 1911. *No.* 308.

Your telegram No. 31 received.

We have no objection to your making the proposed declaration to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We have not undertaken anything with regard to the Bagdad Railway or the Khanekin branch line. *We have merely abandoned our opposition to the participation of foreign capital in the scheme, and have expressed a wish to take over the Sedidje-Khanekin line, in case the railway should be divided up among the interested Powers. We are in no wise bound in the question of the four per cent increase in the customs duties. With regard to the railway from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf, we consider it proper, that we, as one of the four interested Powers, should participate in this scheme, if, in addition to England, Germany and Turkey should do so—but only on condition that no financial sacrifices be demanded of us.* Our participation may be of help to England and France. We should be glad to learn the course of further negotiations.

(649) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, March* 13-26, 1911.

After we had discussed the question of the railways in Asia Minor in the vicinity of the Black Sea, Cruppi and I passed on to the discussion of the Bagdad Railway.

Here also, Cruppi adopted a non-committal attitude, and said nothing definite about the standpoint of the French Government regarding the last phase, which presents itself as a result of Germany's renouncing her claims to the section Bagdad-Persian Gulf, neither did he say anything about the intentions of France in the future. He merely said, that my presentation of the attitude of Russia, in the question of the Bagdad Railway, as I had expounded it to him in our private interview, had been extremely interesting to him, and that he had communicated my statements to P. Cambon who was attentively watching this question in London.

On the strength of your telegram of March 10-23, I informed the Minister that I now confirmed these statements in the name of the Imperial Government. *Cruppi replied, he attached the greatest importance to that information, and promised to keep us au courant. When I asked him which solution France preferred—a division into*

separate sections, or internationalisation of the whole line—Cruppi made no definite reply.

(650) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, March* 1-14, 1911.

Grey announced to me, that he had a very confidential communication to make. The German Government had just renewed a step, which had already been made two years ago without then leading to any practical result. It consists in a proposal to enter into direct negotiations regarding questions which were to be more closely defined. *The Berlin Cabinet had suggested that it would be useful to find a general formula which would more closely determine the relations between the two nations.*

Sir Edward stated to me, that certain interests of England, and those of general peace, might make the improvement of relations between England and Germany desirable by concluding an agreement, which would be supplementary to the German-French Morocco agreement, and the present negotiations between Germany and Russia.

The London Cabinet in consequence indicated three points which might form the basis of an agreement: (1) The Bagdad Railway. (2) The Railways in South Persia. (3) Armaments.

I asked the Minister whether he had more definitely specified the term Bagdad Railway. He said that he had defined the question by this single word without further explanations. *The same might be said concerning the railways in South Persia, and, he went on to say, for England the thing was to protect herself against the danger of German railway concessions in those districts where England wants to have the exclusive control of railway lines, the concessions for which she will eventually demand. This did not signify that England would oppose German participation if this were to be of a purely financial nature,* no more than she would oppose French and Russian co-operation if this should be desired.

Sir Edward said nothing concerning the armaments. His views on this subject are already known to you. I do not think that he believes in the immediate realisation of this idea, but it is his intention to bring it up for discussion.

As to the idea of a general formula, which Germany has proposed, the Minister expressed himself in detail. In his first reply to the German Government, he did not entirely reject such an idea, but he remarked, that the agreement between England, France and Russia contained no such general formula, that, at all events, the London Cabinet could not accept any formula, which might prejudice the existing connections with the Cabinets of Petersburg and Paris, but that he would be willing to consider any eventual propositions of the German Government.

In explanation, Sir Edward added, that he could not see the necessity of such a general formula, and that such a formula would be possible only, if Russia and France were to be included; that would lead to a kind of general agreement, but which, anyhow, could not alter the actual situation.[1]

I thanked Sir Edward for his communication, and told him that Your Excellency would appreciate their strictly friendly and confidential character.

The proposed negotiations therefore cover four points and not three, the three which had been proposed by England and that of the general formula proposed by the Berlin Cabinet.[2]

(651) *The Same to the Same. Letter, March* 15-28, 1911.

In consequence of the departure of our last Courier, I have not yet had time to give you an account of my impression of the communication which Grey made to me. *I need not go into details concerning the question of armaments which, it appears to me, is more a matter of form.* Even if this question could not be solved it would not mean that the proposed negotiations have not led to practical results. I have to mention only the point which is due to the initiative of Germany—the general formula, which is to determine the future relations of the two Powers. From the political point of view, this appears to me to be the most important point. It would mean an Anglo-German agreement covering all questions which directly interest us—Turkey, Persia and the whole East.

You will have observed that Grey, in his reply, has stated his firm

[1] An instance of Grey's remarkable ethics. Some sort of an agreement was to be reached with Germany, but it would not "alter the actual situation."

[2] A sample of the alertness of Count Benckendorff's mind.

intention to adhere to the basis of the three-Power Entente, whereby all such proposals as an exclusive agreement between Germany and England are declined.

I cannot, however, deny that public opinion in England, to-day, is less indisposed to make concessions to Germany, in order to improve the relations between the two countries, than has been the case heretofore, and I must add, that the veil, which covers, in the eyes of the general public, our negotiations with Germany, works here like some corrosive, and that it is in our interest to put an end as soon as possible to this situation.

As is generally known, the English-Russian Entente has for particular reasons never been popular with the extreme Left in Parliamentary circles. The pro-German propaganda first turned to this party, and then utilized our present negotiations with Germany in order to attract to itself wider circles of the liberal party. The goal is far from being reached, but certain journals, as for instance the "Westminster Gazette" no longer oppose the thought of better relations with Germany. . . . .

Such a spirit encourages the efforts in favour of a rapprochement with Germany, and these will be weakened only after the scope of our negotiations with Germany has been made known.

The most important point is that of our freedom of action in the question of the 4% increase of the Turkish customs duties. If this freedom is clearly established, England will know to what point she can reckon upon our support in the matter of the Bagdad Railway negotiations, *and the impression will thereby be avoided, that Russian policy is answerable for the concessions which England must make in this matter.*

I do not believe that it will be possible for her further to maintain all her claims regarding Koweit and the Bagdad line to the Persian Gulf. It will be rather a question of altering the Turkish proposals in a sense favourable for England.

I furthermore consider it at the present moment urgent to relegate to the background all questions in which Russian and English interests are opposed in the Persian railway question, by declaring ourselves in agreement with such lines, the construction of which is unavoidable. We should also settle all other questions in the most conciliatory spirit, such as, for instance, that of the boundary of territorial waters.

Otherwise, it would be of too great an advantage to Germany to deal separately with us and with England. Every semblance of a discord between us and England would be directly useful to Germany.

(652) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Sazonoff. Report, March* 18-31, 1911.

The British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has agreed to the idea of an Anglo-American Arbitration Treaty, which would not contain the usual limitations, but would extend to all questions. This declaration has created a certain amount of excitement, not only in Governmental circles here, but also among the public.

In this declaration of Grey's, one is inclined to see the first step towards a rapprochement between England and America—which rapprochement is considered in the German press as a danger to German interests—a coalition of England and America, with the possible participation of France. These fears weaken the impression made by Grey's speech, who expressed the hope of an improvement in the relations between Germany and England.

(653) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, March,* 3-16, 1911. *No.* 271.

I am writing to Teheran:

"The British Ambassador has returned to the question of a concession for an English railway from Mohammerah to Khoramabad. He remarked that England was greatly interested in securing such a concession for herself, although she does not intend to construct the railway without having previously notified us.

"This line would later be extended to Julfa, in order to link it up with our Caucasian lines, as stipulated in the Russian proposal of 1908 concerning a Persian railway from the Caspian Sea via Teheran to Mohammerah. *The English Government apparently, needs such a concession principally to soothe public opinion in England, and perhaps to be able to exert pressure on Germany in the matter of the Southern end of the Bagdad Railway. I again pointed out to the Ambassador how very harmful such a railway would be to our commercial interests, whereupon he repeated that it was at present only a question of a concession."*

(654) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 8-21, 1911.

The negotiations of the Sublime Porte with the Bagdad Railway Company are almost concluded and the ratification is to take place within the next few days. *Simultaneously, the Turkish Government informed the British Ambassador, that it only awaits the signing of the German renouncement to the Bagdad-Persian Gulf line in order to begin negotiations with England regarding this section of the Bagdad line.* The negotiations with the French, as to the Adriatic Railway and the Samsun-Sivas line, are proceeding favourably, the Turks, apparently, wishing to meet the French. The negotiations with Chester, on the other hand, are dragging considerably, this rendering the latter dependent on us; we might be able to make use of this circumstance very shortly.

(655) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, March* 11-24, 1911. *No.* 312.

Our Minister at Teheran telegraphs:

"Within the last few days Greenway, one of the directors of the Anglo-Persian Petroleum Company and of the Persian Bank, has arrived from South Persia. He has personally, and of his own accord, proposed, to the Ministers and the Regent, to finance a railroad from Mohammerah to Smirenabad, should the British and Russian Government be agreeable to this:

"The Ministers have received this proposal with approval, although they fear opposition on the part of the Persian Parliament. The Regent wishes the railroads in Persia to be built as soon as possible; England and Russia, in his opinion, to draw up a common plan, which according to the importance of the different lines, would be gradually executed."

(656) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 14-27, 1911. *No.* 330.

We replied to the communication of the British Ambassador regarding the Mohammerah-Khoramabad line with the following memorandum:

"The proposed railroad is situated in the neutral zone, and, according to Article 3 of the Convention of 1907, we cannot deny

England the right to demand such a concession for herself. *The terminal of this line is, however, situated in closest proximity to our zone of influence; the line would be injurious to our economic interests and would, therefore, be very unfavourably received by public opinion.*[1] Hence we learn with pleasure, that at present it is only a matter of securing the concession for England, and that all questions, relating to the carrying out of this enterprise, will be regulated conjointly with us at some later date. Finally, we thank the Ambassador for informing us that no objections are raised in London to English capital participating in the construction of the Russian lines in North Persia."

(657) *The Russian Minister at Teheran to Sazonoff. Telegram, March* 19-*April* 1, 1911. *No.* 221.

The British Minister here has been instructed officially, to request the Persian Government, to grant England a concession for the construction of a port in Ormusieh, as well as for a railway from this place to Khoramabad and a branch line to Mohammerah. The fact is emphasized that it is for the present only a demand of an option.

(658) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 21-*April* 3, 1911. *No.* 224.

Continuation of my telegram No. 221. Strictly confidential.

Immediately on receipt of the British Minister's note, the Persian Minister of Foreign Affairs requested him temporarily to withdraw the note, ostensibly because public opinion in Persia[2] would connect this concession with England's endeavours to maintain better relations with the Persian Government. *Acting on instructions received, the British Minister has declined this request.*

(659) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 13-26, 1911.

The Persian Government has refused England's request for a railway concession from Mohammerah to Khoramabad on the pretext that the railways in Persia must be purely commercial enterprises.[3] The Minister of Foreign Affairs verbally informed the British

[1] and [2] Last resort of the diplomatist.
[3] A pretext in this case, perhaps, though usually good common sense.

Minister that the Persians see in this line a political aim inasmuch as the railway is not to lead into the Russian sphere of interest, whereby the partition of Persia into spheres of influence would, so to speak, be confirmed. The Regent has expressed the opinion that a concession for a railway from the Russian frontier to Mohammerah would probably be granted to an international or an Anglo-Russian-French syndicate. This latter could then divide the control of the different sections of the line according to the respective spheres of interest.

(660) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, April 26-May 9, 1911. No. 576.*

The negotiations on the railway from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf are apparently dragging, and I request you to answer the following questions:

1.) To what extent can Turkey again freely dispose of this line, and what rights has Germany reserved for herself?

2.) Is the concession granted to Germany for a railway from Bagdad to Alexandrette, and the construction of the port there, a compensation for the renunciation of the line from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf?

3.) Have the stipulations relating thereto been embodied in a document, and if so in what form and how many documents?

(661) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 28-May 11, 1911. No. 229.*

Your telegram No. 576 received. The hitch in the negotiations is rendering the Turks restless, and may be explained by the fact, that England has not yet given a reply to the Turkish proposal to internationalise the railway from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf.

1.) According to informations of the British and French Ambassadors, Germany has only stipulated the following privilege for herself: *Germany's share must be exactly as large as that of any other Power.* As to the rest, the Turks would seem to be again free to dispose of this sector.

2.) The concession for the railway and the harbour at Alexandrette was granted on the occasion of the last year's loan at Berlin and Vienna. In order definitely to secure this important conces-

sion for herself, Germany has probably made far-reaching concessions whilst waiving all claims to the Bagdad-Persian Gulf line.

The formal part of the agreement is secret, but I shall endeavour to submit to you as exact information as possible.

(662) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, May* 2-15, 1911. *No.* 610.

My conversation with the German Ambassador leads me to believe, that Germany has not yet definitely renounced her claim to the Bagdad-Persian Gulf line. A final decision will only be given after various other questions of interest to Germany have been regulated. We should like to know what connection exists between the Alexandrette concession and Germany's renunciation of the Bagdad-Persian Gulf line, and whether the execution of the first enterprise depends on the latter.

(663) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 4-17, 1911. *No.* 264.

Sub No. 265 you will receive the wording of the Turkish communication, made to the British and French Ambassadors relating to Germany's renunciation of the Bagdad-Persian Gulf line. The wording of the German declaration itself is unknown to the Ambassadors. Both regard the declaration as being intentionally abstruse, and, like all German agreements with Turkey, disadvantageous to the latter, bribery generally playing a part therein. The Alexandrette concession is final and does not depend on German participation in the Bagdad-Persian Gulf Railway. The British Government has still returned no answer.

(664) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 4-17, 1911. *No.* 265.

March 8, 1911. Declaration.

"The Bagdad Company is ready to waive the concession for the 4 or 500 kilometers of railway from the Persian Gulf, as well as for a harbour at Basra and the Persian Gulf, in favour of a new Turkish Company in which the Bagdad Railway Company is willing to be in the minority, as regards the participation of Turkish capital. It, however, desires to participate to the same extent, as does the

capital of any third non-Turkish Power. At the same time, the Bagdad Railway Company reserves to itself the right to come to an understanding with the new company, or the Turkish State, in order to be granted a compensation for the disadvantages arising from the renunciation to the 500 kilometers mentioned above, all the more as the construction of the section in question is less difficult, and less expensive, than the remaining part of the Bagdad line."

This text was communicated to both Embassies on March 11-24. In the copy handed to Lowther, the words "is ready to waive" were altered by Rifaat Pasha into "waives," and the word "compensation" replaces the word "indemnity," which is crossed out. The Ambassadors cannot explain this difference.

(665) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Letter, May* 11-24, 1911.

I received your private letter of May 5-18. Yesterday morning, I called on Sir Arthur Nicolson, who told me Buchanan had informed him that I was instructed to speak to him in strict confidence about the Bagdad Railway and the state of our negotiations with Germany. He gave me Buchanan's telegram to read, which reproduces the contents of your letter very closely and supplements your interview with the Ambassador.

Sir Arthur immediately understood the difficulties of the whole situation. He remarked that it was impossible to express an opinion, without being acquainted with all the counter proposals of Germany. *He is convinced that it would be disastrous if our negotiations with Germany were broken off.* If it be a question—as the German Ambassador told you—of undertaking an obligation "in respect of the whole Bagdad Railway system, including the Gulf section, the construction of which will have to be discussed later," then, *Nicolson says, a clause must be added to this declaration which, while excluding our opposition on principle, leaves us the possibility of participation without making financial sacrifices.* The latter would be the case if, independently of the other Powers, we were to yield to Germany's wish and give our consent to the increase in the Turkish import duties. He, moreover, told me that this was his personal view and that I should have to apply to Sir Edward Grey himself.

I have just spoken with the Minister. But before I report to you on my interview with him I should like to say something about certain statements which Count Pourtalès made to you. *He declared Germany had at her disposal sufficient funds to construct the line from Koniah to Bagdad without any help whatever. That is probable, but not proved.* German official and financial circles make this assertion. English and French financial circles are more sceptical; the latter especially believe Germany will have to resort to the support of the Paris Exchange.

Anyway, the calculations seem to be based on the surplus profit of the Turkish Public Debt. But the Turkish Treasury cannot manage without this surplus profit, unless other sources of income should be at its disposal, and there can be no other than the increased customs duties. *Count Pourtalès maintains that Germany is so bent on coming to an agreement with Russia, because all attempts to come to an understanding with England and Turkey have been fruitless. As to Turkey, it seems that the relinquishment of the Gulf sector by the German concessionaires is an accomplished fact.* In that respect the negotiations have not been fruitless; on the contrary, Turkey seems to have subjected herself still further to German interests. As regards England, the expression "fruitless" would be premature; negotiations are proceeding slowly, just like our own. Of course, Germany would be greatly relieved if Russia were to separate her interests from those of England and France, and were thus to deliver up her chief weapon: her consent to the increase of the customs duties.

In this connection we must keep in mind our direct interests in Persia, and we must carefully consider in what way we can protect them. We should otherwise have parted with our last and most effective weapon and, at the same time, have lost the support of England in particular, as well as that of France. England will find herself obliged to conduct the negotiations in quite another spirit, and since Germany desires to preserve peace, I think it likely that she will go very far to meet England when she has only England to deal with.

On the other hand, Germany will be the mistress of a vast railway system equally important in an economic, a political, and a strategic respect, spreading over the whole of Asia Minor and connecting all seas:

she will be so closely bound up with the interests of Turkey, that she will find herself obliged to protect Turkish interests as much as her own and it will be difficult, nay, I might say impossible, for Germany to fulfil all the obligations which she is prepared to undertake towards us. The chief interest of Germany will be the interests of Turkey and not the preservation of Russian interests in Persia. . . . . .

I am now coming to my interview with Sir Edward Grey. The Minister regards the situation as serious, but remains calm. He reminds me of his words in Parliament the substance of which was about as follows:

"As long as Turkey grants concessions for railways, the building of harbours, or other enterprises on her own territory, concessions which do not presuppose that anyone is to renounce an acquired right, opposition on principle is impossible and illegal;—on the other hand, however, the Powers are at liberty to facilitate such undertakings, or not to facilitate them if they have legal means of doing so at their disposal."

This refers, says Sir Edward, to the increase in the customs duties. This, in his opinion, is the very crux of the whole question. *He says, it would be preferable if our declaration were to refer only to the section Koniah-Bagdad, but, if that be impossible, we should at least not undertake any obligations in the question of the increase in the customs duties, and so long as this was the case he could not raise any categorical objections.*

In replying to my question, he stated that the agreement of the three Powers, regarding the Bagdad Railway, to which the London Cabinet remained true, was not intended unconditionally to oppose the construction of the entire system of the Bagdad Railway; its only object was, that consent should be given conjointly and in full agreement on the day on which consent to the increase in the customs duties became imperative. When, therefore, we find ourselves in a position in which we must give our consent to a clause which extends Article I of the project of November 29th to the whole railway system, the last sentence at least must retain its meaning, viz: *Russia is not more bound in the question of the increase of the customs duties than she ever was, because consent presupposes on her part a financial sacrifice.*[1]

[1] A splitting of hairs—Benckendorff's fine diplomatic *technique.*

In the reverse case, the Minister said, the whole situation would be changed.

(666) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, June* 8-21, 1911.

You are right in assuming that I shall not be able to speak to either Grey or Nicolson these days. But with regard to the question raised in your letter of June 2nd, there is absolutely no need of an interview. As you are aware, Sir Edward Grey has formulated his standpoint with regard to the Khanekin-Teheran line with the greatest precision, and this standpoint has since been confirmed in an important audience with the King. The attitude of England in this question may be summed up as follows:

The Anglo-Russian Convention does not afford any basis upon which an English protest against German control of the said line might be raised; England, however, so greatly fears such a control that, should the German control come into effect, our Convention with England would become shaken and its political effect would be called into question, *because; according to the whole spirit of the Convention of* 1907, *Russian influence in Northern Persia is intended to be exclusive, just as English influence is in the South.*

A railway line,[1] under German control, would give this Power first-class political influence in Persia. *Therefore, England would also have to reckon with Germany at Teheran, and this would involve negotiations which, it is believed here, would be most welcome to Germany.*[2] It is evident that the whole situation would be changed to the detriment of our interests and of our position in Persia. This refers to the exercise of the financial control on the part of Germany; the consequences just explained would all the more be bound to set in if we gave up the construction of the railway. Such a renunciation would—this must not be doubted—give the *coup de grâce* to the Anglo-Russian policy in Persia, and an Anglo-German combination would supplant the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

On the strength of these arguments, the political effects of

[1] The Bagdad line entered Persian territory nowhere, and the proposed Bagdad-Khanekin branch was a very minor affair, running on Persian territory but a short distance. The Germans were willing to have Russia build the line.

[2] Rather improbable, since Germany had recognized in writing the "privileged" position in Persia of Great Britain and Russia by documents here included, which see in Chapter II, Book One.

which, by the way, have never been so clearly expressed as I have done here, Sir Edward advised us to omit the financial side of things altogether for the present.

I think, Sir Edward emphasizes this fact, in order to make it impossible for us to declare that we cannot retain the control of this line. As soon as the moment will have arrived, the necessary funds will be offered to us, and to decline that loan, or to refuse the respective guarantee, would amount, not to our being unable to retain the control in question, but to our being unwilling to do so.

It appears to me that this purely financial consideration must be solved in a certain sense for political reasons. *On the one hand, we have undertaken the obligation towards Germany to construct this line; on the other hand, we cannot simply pass over the English objections to a renunciation in favour of Germany without thus bringing about a radical change in our relations to England.*[1] . . . . . .

Can we promise Germany to construct this line at a date to be determined by Germany, and not by Russia, without our having received an option on the construction from the Persian Government? . . . . . I shall mention this question later to Sir A. Nicolson, but entertain no doubts in this connection, because British interests are involved by these considerations. When I pointed out to him, that, in case our negotiations were broken off, Germany would demand such a concession for herself, Sir Arthur agreed; he added, however, that in that case *nothing would be left to Russia and England but conjointly to oppose such a concession most emphatically at Teheran. I do not think it likely that the Persian Government would maintain its refusal. But it is always dangerous to promise something which one has not yet in hand, and it might be advisable to come to an understanding with Germany in order eventually to induce her to intervene at Teheran in our favor.*

(667) *The Same to the Same. Letter, July* 19-*Aug.* 1, 1911.

Sir Edward Grey promised me, a few days ago, to communicate to me England's reply to Turkey's proposal regarding the Bagdad-Persian Gulf Railway and the Turkish Customs increase. The Turkish proposal, as you know, propounded a new company in

[1] A bad diplomatic predicament due to the meeting at Potsdam.

which Turkey was to participate with 40 and Germany, France and England with 20 per cent, each. Thus, Germany would have been able indirectly to dispose over 60 per cent.

The English counter-proposal substitutes for this combination an equal participation of the four Powers named, and a fifth share for Russia, as we desired at the time.

I do not believe that Turkey or Germany can accept these new English proposals.[1]

(668) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Confidential Letter. Aug. 25-Sept. 7, 1911. No. 643.*

By today's courier the text of the German-Russian Agreement of August 6-19 is being forwarded to you.

For your personal information, I add that we have obtained Germany's promise not to construct any branch lines of the Bagdad Railway in the territory included between it and the Russian[2] *and Persian*[3] *boundary north of Khanekin, nor to lend any support to any enterprises of that sort, with the exception of those branch lines which we already know of and for which a concession has already been granted, viz: Mossul-Erbil, Diala-Tuskurmatly, and Halif-Mardin-Diarbekir-Kharput. This promise was given me verbally by the German Ambassador and has been submitted to the Emperor in the shape of a report the wording of which was edited by me in conjunction with Count Pourtalès.*

I have confidentially notified Sir G. Buchanan of this obligation. It has, at her own request, not been embodied in the text of our Agreement with Germany, because the Berlin Cabinet had officially pledged itself in this respect to the Turkish Government.

[1] They were accepted. The tone of Benckendorff's last two letters shows to what extent he could pass under English influence, when the Entente seemed in danger. The Russian ambassador must have realized that a mountain was being made of a molehill by Sir Edward Grey, whose objections to the Bagdad railroad remained "on principle," despite all avowals to the contrary. In the end this was recognized and the Potsdam meeting had the effect desired by Germany and Russia.

[2] Boundary of the "Russian" zone of influence.

[3] Boundary of the "Persian" neutral zone; showing how Neratoff's mind worked: occupied Persia seemed "Russian" territory to him.

VI

THE ENTENTE AND THE MOROCCAN QUESTION

(March—November 1911)

(669) *Iswolsky, Russian Ambassador at Paris, to Sazonoff, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Letter, March* 15-28, 1911.

I have received your confidential telegram of March 6, authorizing me to assist the Spanish Ambassador here, as far as possible, in the adjustment of the misunderstanding between Spain and France in regard to the Morocco affair. After the receipt of this telegram Perez Kaballero called on me with the same request.

The execution of these instructions has been facilitated for me through the fact that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, himself, acquainted me, some time ago, with the details of the question. Therefore, in my conversation with Cruppi,[1] I could easily revert to this question without creating the appearance of direct interference.

Although the misunderstandings between Spain and France are of no direct interest to us, I consider it necessary to inform you briefly in regard to this question.

Based on the provisions of the Algeciras Act, but still more on the semi-public, semi-secret Franco-Spanish Agreement of 1904, the Madrid Cabinet now protest against the endeavours of France, not only to exclude Spain from Moroccan questions in general, but even, to a certain extent, to make difficulties for her in her own zone. These attempts make themselves chiefly felt in respect of financial control, of military organization, and the building of the railway from Tangier to Fez. As the Spanish Ambassador said to me, *France's endeavours, to subjugate Morocco, are becoming more*

[1] French minister of foreign affairs.

and more apparent, in opposition to the spirit of the Algeciras Act and to the various separate Franco-Spanish Treaties. France, on her part, contends, that the measures taken by her, are solely for the purpose of creating such conditions in Morocco as would be equally advantageous for all European countries, and are thus absolutely in accordance with the Algeciras Act. *The French Government is inclined, as Cruppi himself declares, to treat Spain like a poor relation, even counter-protests are raised in France, accusing Spain of maintaining an unnecessarily large number of troops in the Spanish zone, and of not observing the principle of the open door.*

It is very difficult to say, who is right and who is wrong. Notwithstanding, in my conversation with Cruppi, I refrained from passing judgment of any kind, merely pointing out that it was very important, for the general political interests of France and Russia, to satisfy the Spanish demands, so as to prevent this country from throwing itself into the arms of Germany and the Triple Alliance. Since Algeciras, Germany's relations with Spain have been very cold and reserved. The Madrid Cabinet inclines at present rather towards the Triple Entente, and it would be a pity were it now to seek support from Germany.

Cruppi said he agreed with me and he wishes to accede, as far as possible, to the Spanish demands. He spoke, however, only in general terms, and, apparently, avoided any expression of opinion concerning the single points of the Spanish Note. Perez Kaballero complains of just these generalities, and intends to have an interview with the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the next few days, in order to obtain from him a positive answer. I shall inform you as to the result of this interview. *We have agreed with Perez Kaballero that our participation in the Franco-Spanish negotiations shall be kept strictly confidential.*

(670) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Sazonoff. Confidential Report, March 31-April 13, 1911.*

Cambon has just returned from Paris, where he went, as is his custom, to discuss pending questions with the leaders of French policy. As he told me confidentially, another object of his visit was to make the acquaintance of Cruppi, whom he did not know personally until then. The impression made upon the Ambassador by the new Minister is that of an able lawyer, desirous of becoming familiar

as quickly as possible with all the difficult questions of his department, but who has not as yet arrived at a definite opinion.

Cambon also participated in the conferences regarding the present situation in Morocco, and was authorized to obtain the consent of the Berlin Cabinet to a military intervention on the part of France, if Europeans living in Fez should be threatened with danger. *At his first interview with the German Secretary of State, a very ungracious reception was accorded him, and he encountered a categorical refusal to enter into any exchange of views respecting a French military intervention exceeding the limits of the Algeciras Act. The negotiations lasted several days, and were very difficult; the Ambassador told me, that he was repeatedly obliged to point out, how great would be the responsibility assumed by Germany if the Europeans in Fez were to be massacred.*

After much hesitation, the German Secretary of State has handed to M. Cambon, *as the latter alleges,* a reply, in accordance with which, Germany would admit, in case of absolute necessity, a military intervention on the part of France, the occupation of Rabat and the entry of French troops into Fez.

Pan-German circles here are much excited, and accuse France of violating the Algeciras Act, and of aspiring to a protectorate over Morocco, under the pretext of protecting the European population. *It seems to me, that the reply of the German Government was not so favorable as stated by the French Ambassador. The Acting Secretary of State, Under-Secretary Zimmermann, told me today, that Germany had not given the Paris Cabinet a definite answer in regard to the possibility of a military intervention, and that in Berlin it was hoped, that the improvement in the situation in Morocco, reported by the German Ambassador at Paris, and the Consul in Fez, would render a violation of the Algeciras Act unnecessary.*

There is no doubt, if Germany should ever give her consent to such a violation, she would demand a high price from France.

(671) *The Same to the Same. Report, April* 15-28, 1911.

The Morocco question is being strongly exploited by the newspapers of the Pan-German Party, and is threatening to imperil anew the relations between France and Germany which, thanks

to the efforts of the French Ambassador, have been improving. Although in moderate circles here the Pan-German newspaper articles, demanding the partition of Morocco between Germany and France, and threatening energetic measures in case of refusal on the part of France, are rejected, it cannot be denied that, for the time being, general excitement against France prevails here.

The Government itself assumes a waiting attitude, and avoids any expression of opinion on the Morocco question in the official press. Such reserve indicates plainly the dissatisfaction of the Wilhelmstrasse with the action of France.

I received the same impression from a conversation with Cambon who had just spoken with the Imperial Chancellor.

The Ambassador was authorized to advise Germany of the measures contemplated by France; at the same time he stated that it was France's intention to maintain the sovereignty of the Shereef, and the integrity of Morocco, with due regard for the principle of the Open Door.

According to Cambon, his statements were received very coldly, and he was given to understand that an occupation of Fez by the French would be regarded by Germany to be a violation of the Algeciras Act and of the Agreement of 1909, whereby the Berlin Cabinet would, for its part, obtain a free hand. Cambon feels uneasy about the feeling here and intends leaving for Paris tomorrow, to discuss matters personally with Cruppi. He believes, that Kiderlen's long absence is not altogether unconnected with the desire to postpone as long as possible official declarations in regard to Morocco.

At the close of our conversation, Cambon stated that, in view of the uncompromising attitude of the Berlin Cabinet, a favorable solution of the Morocco question would depend on the support which the Paris Cabinet in its present difficult position received from its friends at St. Petersburg and London.[1]

I must also mention that, in some of the German papers, Delcassé is regarded as the true originator of French Moroccan policy.

[1] Who were just then doing their best to partition Persia for good, as shown in these documents. For being politically abstinent in Persia and the Far East, and for her support of England in the Bagdad railroad issue, France had been given a free hand in North Africa by Sir Edward Grey to an extent which even Russia had to guess at.

(672) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Letter, April 26 May 9, 1911.*

Sir Arthur Nicolson did not conceal from me the fact, that the Morocco question is disquieting the London Cabinet. He believes that France will be compelled to occupy Fez; that the situation in the city appears to be threatening; that a mere expedition for the protection of Europeans would not be a particularly alarming undertaking, *but that the experience of all European States, beginning with England, shows that it is easier to occupy a city than to withdraw again;* that, in case the occupation of Fez should last for any great length of time, political complications might arise; that hitherto the official declarations of the German Government had been kept in a quiet tone, but that it was difficult to form an opinion as to the future.

On the other hand, the Spanish Ambassador declares that in case of French action, Spain will likewise be obliged to advance in certain regions.

Sir Arthur told me, he had pointed out to the Ambassador how unfounded such an assumption appeared to him; if France determined on an expedition with the fixed purpose of protecting Europeans, this did not justify Spain in proceeding actively in other parts of Morocco, where the presence of her troops was in no way necessary.

Sir Arthur believes, that his statements have produced a certain effect in Madrid, all the more so, as on this occasion he did not disguise the fact that, precisely as during the last crisis, the obligations undertaken by the London Cabinet had caused it to maintain a friendly attitude towards France; this attitude would remain the same in the present instance.

Nicolson learned, to his great satisfaction, that the Russian Government had expressed itself in similar terms. He sees in this a guarantee against possible future entanglements.

(673) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Confidential Report, April 28-May 11, 1911.*

. . . . . *With regard to the diplomatic side of the Morocco affair I fear that Cruppi, who has absolutely no diplomatic experience, is indulging in a dangerous and, in no way justified, optimism.*

As you have observed, he replies in answer to all my questions, con-

cerning the course of negotiations in Berlin, that he notes no inclination on the part of the German Government to oppose the actions of France or to demand compensations of any kind. His attitude towards Spain is quite as optimistic, even if much more discontented. This optimism seems to be based on the belief, that, if France determines not to exceed the terms of the Algeciras Act, and not to undertake a permanent or protracted occupation of Fez, neither Germany nor Spain would have grounds for protest or active measures.

In reality the situation seems to me to be totally different: from all I hear the Berlin Cabinet has adopted a very adroit and advantageous position; without protesting for the present against France's action, it reserves to itself the right to declare at any moment that the Algeciras Act has been violated. *It is probable that Spain is also being incited by Germany.* In this way German diplomacy remains master of the situation and can make the question acute at any moment, in accordance with the needs of its own home and foreign policies. Here lies a danger, which Cruppi does not sufficiently take into account. *This danger is all the greater, because Cruppi, so far as I can judge, has no fixed programme in the Morocco affair, and is influenced by various currents and circumstances.* In this respect, Pichon's resignation is greatly to be regretted; it is true, he is being sharply criticised at present, but he knew exactly what he wanted in Morocco, and did not allow himself to be influenced by the chauvinistic circles, which exist here as everywhere.

In conclusion, I would say that my fears are shared by those Ambassadors here who are most sincere with me, namely, the representatives of England and Italy. It is worth noting, that Bertie[1] *personally believes Germany is only awaiting a favorable opportunity to declare the Algeciras Act as no longer existent, in order to occupy one or two ports, among them, Mogador.* A heavy blow would thus be dealt to British interests; the channels of communication with South Africa would be threatened.

(674) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Letter, May* 10-23, 1911.

Yesterday, Cambon gave me details in regard to Emperor William's visit here. He confirmed the words of Sir Arthur Nicolson—

[1] Sir F.—, British ambassador at Paris.

namely, that His Majesty had refrained from all political conversation with English statesmen.

Only the German Ambassador, Count Metternich, went to Grey and asked him what the attitude of England, in the Morocco question, was and would be, and what the London Cabinet thought of the advance of the French on Fez. *Sir Edward answered that the Agreements between England and France imposed on England the obligation to support France;* that the British Government was of opinion, that France was not only justified, but obliged, to protect the interests of the French, English and other foreigners in the capital of Morocco; that the situation in Fez was growing worse daily, and that, consequently, intervention on the part of France would be of advantage to the entire world.

The German Ambassador, whose words, by the way, expressed confidence and thoroughly friendly sentiments, did not oppose these arguments; he confined his remarks exclusively to the contingency that the French occupation of Fez might be of considerable duration. *Sir Edward replied, that, even in this case, the English standpoint would remain unchanged, and that he did not believe German interests would be in any way violated,* for, according to the Agreement concluded between Germany and France, Germany had renounced all political influence, under the condition that her economic interests in Morocco should be protected against all political entanglements. Hereupon, Count Metternich assured him of the conciliatory and peaceful intentions of the German Government, expressing, however, the fear that unexpected events might jeopardize the situation. *Sir Edward responded that England, in any case and under all circumstances, would fulfil her obligations to France.*

Cambon tells me that after this conversation, Sir Edward, who was very uneasy for the moment on account of the Morocco question, looks more confidently into the future. It is needless to call your attention to the fact, that the presence of the German Monarch in London lends special significance to the remarks of Count Metternich.

The attitude of Spain has caused uneasiness here and in Paris. On the one hand, one finds it fairly natural that Spanish public opinion should be aroused by occurrences in Morocco. Notwithstanding, people are wondering whether the energetic attitude of the Madrid Cabinet, which does not exclude the possibility of complications with France, is

an entirely independent one. The occupation of Fez, by the French, and of Tetuan, by the Spanish, would open the door for the dismemberment of Morocco, which might have dangerous consequences. However, the latest news from Madrid seems to be better, and the King himself has declared that the Spanish troops will not occupy Tetuan.

Cambon told me, that this conversation of the German Ambassador with Grey was the only political one that took place between English and German statesmen on the occasion of the Emperor's visit to London. I asked Nicolson whether the Bagdad question had come under discussion in any way. He told me it had not been touched upon with a single word.

It is true, Emperor William had a long conversation with Asquith. The King asked the Premier about it and was told in reply that the conversation had been a very interesting one, but rather from an historical and scientific standpoint than from a political one; they had discussed the reciprocal influence of human races upon one another and the superiority of certain of these races.

The press here accorded a very warm welcome to the person of the Emperor and the Imperial family, but was reserved in respect of political matters.

Emperor William's visit to London was decidedly a great success. The Emperor understood better than ever before how to win the sympathy of the English public, and, in this respect, his visit helped greatly to overcome national antipathies and to encourage mutual endeavours to restore good relations; *as to the actual political questions of the day, however, I do not believe that any positive results were obtained.*

P. S. I spoke to Sir Edward Grey after this letter had already been written. He confirmed what Cambon had told me in regard to Sir Edward's conversation with the German Ambassador, and repeated a word Cambon had used, but which I hesitated to quote in my letter, because I was not sure whether Cambon had employed the English expression correctly; *Count Metternich had asked what the consequences would be if the Morocco Government came under French influence, and the Algeciras Act were violated. Sir Edward replied, that, in the event of entanglements, all English obligations would become "operative."* [1]

[1] Grey serving notice that, right or wrong, France would be supported by him.

(675) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, April 22-May 5, 1911. No. 559.*

I beg you to emphasize to the French Government the fact, that our friendly remonstrances at Berlin have led to a favorable result and that we have received a very satisfactory answer from Germany.[1] *Express on this occasion the hope, that we shall be supported if necessary, in like fashion by France.*

(676) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Letter, April 28-May 11, 1911.*

Your telegram No. 559 received.

As Cruppi is about to leave for Brussels, and since our communication should create the deepest possible impression on the Paris Cabinet, I decided to advise Cruppi by letter of the steps undertaken by us at Berlin. The Minister has just replied by letter that France fully appreciates the support rendered her by us.

(677) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Neratoff. Confidential Letter, May 7-20, 1911.*

I consider it necessary to send you two articles from the "Cologne Gazette," May 13-15, containing official communications in regard to the Morocco question. *The first article was occasioned by the endeavours of certain political circles at Paris, London and even Vienna, to represent the exchange of views between us and Berlin, in respect of Morocco, as if pressure had been put on Germany by Russia to prevent her from placing difficulties in the way of French policy in Morocco.*

These allusions, appearing in certain of the Vienna newspapers, are supposed here to be the result of French and English influence. Apparently their object is to arouse dissatisfaction among the public, especially in Pan-German circles, and to find fault with the German Government for having shown all too much yielding weakness towards Russia. Thus, through a newspaper controversy, they hoped to disturb the improving relations between Germany and Russia.

[1] In reply to a communication asking the German Government to give the position of France the fullest consideration. An effect of the Potsdam meeting.

The Pan-German papers have indeed violently assailed the leaders of German policy and, for the first time since assuming office, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kiderlen-Wächter,[1] has been exposed to vehement attacks, not only in regard to the Morocco affair, but also in regard to the Potsdam Conference which led to no positive results.[2]

In the second communication, which contains an answer to the article by the "Rossia," the Berlin Cabinet, not wishing to enter on the dangerous path of a press campaign, avoided emphasizing the differences of opinion between St. Petersburg and Berlin in regard to French policy in Morocco. From my conversation with Bethmann-Hollweg, however, I perceived, that the Imperial Chancellor takes a different view respecting the declarations of our official organ. *He told me, he had not wished to reply to our communication, but he could not conceal from me that the connection mentioned in our official communication, as existing between two questions, which, like Morocco and our Persian negotiations, have in reality nothing in common, had made a very unpleasant impression upon him;*[3] it seemed to him, also, that the mention of confidential negotiations, not yet concluded between two Governments, should not become the object of official communications, until an understanding, as to the kind of communication, had been previously arrived at.

It seems advisable to me not to conceal from you this personal standpoint of the Imperial Chancellor.

(678) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, May 9-22, 1911. No. 635.*

I fully share your opinion that it is desirable to prevent Spain from energetic action in the Morocco question. I consider it, however, better for France and Spain to come to a direct understanding, as Cruppi has suggested, and for us to wait and see the result of the Franco-Spanish negotiations before taking any definite steps on our part.

[1] A slip of the pen. There was no minister of foreign affairs in Germany; the official title being "secretary of state for foreign affairs."

[2] Which results are shown in the correspondence relative to the railroad projects in Southwest Asia. Such, however, was the view of the intemperate, sabre-rattling Pan-Germans and German chauvinists.

[3] The Russian move for harmony between Germany and France in the Morocco question served to ward off a general war.

(679) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Letter, May* 11-24, 1911.

I telegraphed you this morning, that the French troops under General Mouanier marched into Fez last Sunday. They met with no resistance from the Moors in Fez, and *the European colonies are unharmed.*[1]

I have just spoken with Cruppi and congratulated him on the outcome of the expedition. I found him in excellent spirits; he spoke enthusiastically of the French general, whom the press and public opinion have accused of being too slow, but who, in reality, has displayed great foresight and energy.

In reply to my question as to what would be the further programme of the French Government in Morocco, Cruppi made me the following declaration:

"The French Government has declared to the Powers, that it would keep within the limits of the Algeciras Act, and that the French troops would occupy Fez only 'so long as is absolutely necessary.' France will not deviate from this declaration. The occupation of Fez will last only as long as is necessary to strengthen the position of the Sultan, Mulei-Hafid, and of the Maghzen. For the attainment of this object France has one means at her disposal —namely, the French military mission under Colonel Mangin which already exists under the terms of former Agreements in Morocco. With the assistance of this Mission, a sufficiently strong Moroccan Army can be created; there can be no doubt, after the magnificent French expedition to Fez, that the prestige of the French representative, and of the French Government, will be greatly enhanced, and this is a guarantee for public security and order. As soon as this object has been attained, the French Government will withdraw the troops to Casablanca, and the Paris Cabinet is certain, that all the Powers without exception will be convinced of its sincerity and loyalty."

In further conversation, I touched on Spain, asking how far the negotiations with the Madrid Government had progressed. *The Minister said, he had not considered it necessary to reply to the last Spanish proposals, as he did not wish to emphasize the impossibility of their acceptance. He had, however, forwarded instructions to the*

[1] There had been only an *alleged* danger of their being harmed.

French Ambassador in Madrid, which contained a number of practical concessions which, in his opinion, would satisfy Spain.

"I assure you," said Cruppi to me, "that I am ready to do everything possible and impossible for Spain, but one thing we cannot do—accept the dismemberment of Morocco offered to us in a veiled form, as this would also give a third Power the right to lay claim to a part of Morocco. The Spanish have a mania for imitation. Every action on our part calls forth a like action on the part of Spain, even where there is not the slightest reason for it. For example, the Spanish troops have just taken up positions a few kilometers distant from Tetuan. Should they next occupy Tetuan itself, it would call forth a protest from France, and from the other States as well, chief among them, England. Nevertheless, I am convinced that we must come to an understanding with Spain."

I have no reason to doubt Cruppi's sincerity, but I am not yet convinced that his optimism is justified. My question, as to whether he could tell me, even approximately, how long the French would occupy Fez, he answered evasively, and, I believe, he does not take into account how difficult it will be to carry out the contemplated programme.

Be that as it may, the first act of the Morocco "drama" has been happily brought to a conclusion; the second, and much more dangerous, phase begins now. As I said in my last letter, a simultaneous inner political crisis in France would signify great danger.

(680) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, June* 19-*July* 2, 1911. *No.* 811.

Urgent. The French Ambassador has, in the name of his Government, entered into an exchange of views with us, regarding the situation created by the decision of the German Government to send a warship to the Moroccan port Agadir, to protect German subjects.

The French Government realizes the gravity of the means employed, and seems on this account to hesitate. I have emphasized certain sides of the question, which demand mature attention. As Germany has advised all the Powers of her decision, it can hardly be expected that she will not carry it out. We have, therefore, to reckon wth a fact. *The military side is of secondary importance; the object is a diplomatic one—the protection of Germany's political interests, since the formal terms of the Act of Algeciras have*

already been violated.[1] Germany is probably desirous of conducting new negotiations with France regarding Morocco, and wishes, in this connection, to be supported by a *fait accompli. From statements of the French Ambassador here, it is believed that France, in all probability will send a warship to Mogador, to answer the German military measure with a like one, under the simple pretext of wishing to strengthen the police force in Mogador in accordance with the Algeciras Act.* As to the diplomatic side, the French Ambassador has expressed himself in favor of international negotiations, in which I agree with him, and not direct negotiations between France and Germany, as, on the one hand, this would render more difficult a peaceful solution, and, on the other hand, would not be advisable in respect of our participation in the negotiations. Therefore, we must assume that the French Government, in its answer to the Berlin Cabinet, will rely on international Acts and will communicate these to all participants of the Algeciras Conference. *The French Ambassador adopts a negative attitude towards the idea of a Conference.*[2]

As this entire matter affects the London Cabinet more than us, we should like to conform our attitude to that of England. For this reason, I ask you to advise us immediately of the views of the British Government.

(681) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, June 20-July 3, 1911. No.* 135.

Your telegram 811 received.

Have advised Nicolson of contents. *He says the question is of such gravity that it will be considered tomorrow by the Cabinet Council.* He will inform me tomorrow of the result. He gave the same answer to Cambon and Metternich as to me.

(682) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June 20-July 3, 1911. No.* 136.

Metternich has announced here the sending of a German warship to Agadir for the protection of German interests, the Government

[1] By the occupation of the Moroccan capital; it would seem that Neratoff took that view of it.

[2] The European Powers, generally, were in favor of "Conferences" only when an interest of their own was not placed in jeopardy thereby.

having been requested to do so by German subjects in the neighbourhood. He gave the assurance that the ship would be withdrawn, as soon as security in Morocco was again established. Nicolson pointed out to the Ambassador, that Agadir was not an open port and that he was not aware that foreigners lived in the neighbourhood. **Metternich says that a like communication has been sent to Paris and Madrid.**

(683) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June 20-July 3,* 1911. *No.* 137.

In the name of his Government, Metternich added to the above statement the following:

German reports do not substantiate the occurrences which have provoked the action of France and Spain. The conduct of these two Powers makes the Algeciras Act illusory. The German warship will be withdrawn, as soon as the French and Spanish forces are recalled.[1] *Germany is prepared to enter into fresh negotiations with France, Spain and, also, England in respect of Morocco.* **The German Government admits that these negotiations will be difficult, but it does not regard the difficulties as insurmountable.**

(684) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June 20-July 3,* 1911. *No.* 138.

Owing to the German supplementary declaration, *Nicolson regards the situation, if not disquieting, at least as very serious. The entire London press emphasizes the gravity of the situation and shows sympathy for France. Only the "Westminster Gazette" endeavors to minimize the significance of the incident.*

(685) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June 22-July 5,* 1911. *No.* 139.

I refer to my telegram No. 135.

Grey told Count Metternich personally, yesterday, that under no circumstances could England remain disinterested in the Morocco question, as British interests in Morocco are more important than those of Germany and, in addition, England has assumed obligations towards France which she would fulfil under all circumstances. The appearance of a German warship at Agadir had created a new situation, and England could consent to no solution in which she herself had not taken

[1] German diplomacy was fully capable of absurdities as shown in 682 and 683.

part. The wording of the answer was drawn up yesterday by the Cabinet.

In reply to my question, whether, in his opinion, it was preferable to put the situation before all the signatory Powers of the Algeciras Act, or to proceed to negotiations between the Powers most directly interested, *Grey said that France was the Power most directly interested, that he would leave the initiative to her, and would support the French view.* Personally, he believes that for the moment direct negotiations between Germany, France, Spain and England would be preferable and that a Conference should be called only in case of necessity. Grey asks you to consider this statement as strictly confidential.

(686) *The Same to the Same. Letter, June 22-July 5,* 1911.

I have but little to add to my telegram No. 139. The reply determined upon by the Cabinet Council is serious but does not preclude further negotiations, under the condition, however, that England participates, with a view to her own interests as well to her Agreement with France.

Grey is not much edified by the German mode of procedure; he does not regard the matter, however, tragically. He told me, he could not exactly understand what the motives of Germany could have been. The pretext of wishing to protect German interests in a closed port could not be taken seriously. He emphasized this to the German Ambassador, and told him, that English interests were greater than German interests. Metternich did not insist further on this point. Besides, said the Minister, if it were a question of protecting German interests, after the restoration of order, the recall of the French and Spanish troops would entail the removal of the German warship—and then the *status quo ante* would be re-established.

It is possible, said the Minister, that Germany merely wishes to obtain something. In this case it must be seen whether the compensation in question would be one to which neither France nor England would object, for the consent of both would have to be obtained, as their interests are not identical. I believe, the Minister alludes to the possibility of the cession of a port in favour

of Germany; this would create difficulties in England and would hardly be permitted, even if French interests were not directly involved.

I asked Sir Edward, what he believed would be the further course of negotiations. He said, he would accept a French proposal—personally however, he preferred direct negotiations between France, Germany, Spain and England. Count Metternich has said nothing that could signify a refusal to allow England to participate in these negotiations. This participation is a condition clearly defined in the English reply.

Since this incident occurred, the English press has adopted a decisive but not aggressive attitude. Only the "Daily News" is openly anti-French, and the "Westminster Gazette" has published an article which appears to be inspired by Germany.

(687) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June 23-July 6, 1911. No. 142.*

Pourtalès' statements, which you report to me, confine themselves to the official communication made by the Berlin Cabinet to the various Powers. Pourtalès loses sight of the second declaration made in London, of which, perhaps, he has no knowledge. This second declaration represents the situation in a very different light. The protection of German citizens is not even mentioned. *The sending of the German warship to Agadir is justified by the French and Spanish military intervention, which was a violation of the Algeciras Act and has made this Act illusory.* Metternich has declared that a return to the *status quo ante* appears difficult to him. The incomplete statements of Count Pourtalès are, perhaps, intended to influence our attitude and our diplomatic action. Nicolson requests us to regard as strictly confidential the communication he made to me. *I repeat, the situation is considered here as grave but not alarming.* The most disquieting feature is that no news has arrived concerning events in Agadir.

(688) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, July 6-19, 1911.*

As concerns Morocco, Berlin and Paris have more accurate information than I. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize a few points. *Grey is optimistic; Nicolson looks at everything rather darkly. Candidly, Nicolson never believed Germany would take such a momen-*

tous and unexpected step without having some great object in view. He also believes, and I share his opinion, that Berlin has all too superficially judged the decrease in the tension of English and German public opinion.[1] *Appearances may justify such an assumption, but if Berlin has reckoned with the possibility of an almost neutral attitude on the part of England, it was a mistake; as a matter of fact, Grey's reply and Asquith's declaration have been a surprise. Following upon all the German visits, during the course of which politics were never discussed with the exception of one question put by Count Metternich, this German demonstration has wiped out the progress made by German influence here.*

But the German flag flies at Agadir. That it will be withdrawn, merely because of some simple regulation of a frontier line, or the resumption of some form of secondary negotiations, is not very probable. This would really signify a defeat.

Under the seal of greatest secrecy, Nicolson told me that Metternich, who is not fond of negotiating with him and hardly ever goes to see him, called on him, a few days ago, about some trifling matter and then suddenly (Nicolson is convinced that the Ambassador wished, so to speak, to convey a warning to him) *made the following speech:*

"Between 1866 *and* 1870 *Germany became a great State, victorious over all her enemies, but since then France, defeated though she was, and England, have divided the world between them, whilst Germany has only received a few crumbs; the time has now come for Germany to make just demands."*

You are certainly better aware than I of the conversation between Kiderlen and Cambon. According to what Nicolson and the French Chargé d'Affaires here tell me, it appears that Germany demands, if not all, at least a very large part, of the French Congo;[2] in fact, the German demands are so great that a settlement does not appear likely. I have asked both, what the immediate consequences of a rupture in the negotiations would be. Both have said in reply: First of all, Germany will remain in Agadir, the end she probably has in view.

If this be true, the situation might become menacing. No illusions ought to be cherished on the subject. It is true, Germany

[1] Which was the case.
[2] Result of border rectification.

shows her cards but hesitatingly, and everything may yet change. *The arrival of Gwinner in Paris has aroused in many persons the belief that in reality Bagdad is the real point at issue.* This may be, as a secondary consideration, but I do not believe, it is the real reason. By the way, it appears, Gwinner's visit was only of short duration.

(689) *The Same to the Same. Letter July* 19-*Aug.* 1, 1911.

I have sent a number of telegrams to you during last week, from which you see that the Berlin Cabinet has made several declarations in London, the last of them being so different from all the others, that one is led to believe, the German Government realized at the last moment, they had gone too far, and that only a conciliatory tone could avert the danger of an immediate collision with England. It is true, the British Government, under the impression of Count Metternich's speech, regarded the situation as very serious; I have not noticed, however, the slightest vacillation in London. Still, the British Government, not wishing to aggravate a very acute situation, has abandoned its plan of sending British warships to the Atlantic ports of Morocco.

On July 12-25, Grey asked me to call on him, and informed me of the declaration made to him the day before by the German Ambassador. Your Excellency knows the wording of this declaration, which seemed to be a veiled ultimatum addressed to France; being communicated in London, however, its real object was evidently to make the British Government in one way or the other responsible.

Sir Edward told me that we, as the Allies of France, had a right to be informed as to the true situation. At first he spoke of various, not very friendly, interviews with the German Ambassador, without giving details and without saying more than that his own answers had been adapted to conditions and the language of the German Ambassador. *Not until the day after the ministerial declaration of Asquith's in the House of Commons, did Sir Edward tell me that the first stormy interview had taken place, when Count Metternich, in exceedingly blunt language, demanded an explanation of the speech made by Lloyd George.* This time, I asked him what

his answer had been. After some hesitation he told me, he did not wish to conceal his answer from me, but that he did not wish it to become known, and that it was a secret he was confiding to me. *He had told the German Ambassador that his, the Ambassador's words, had been such, that his feeling of national dignity rendered it impossible for him to answer or make any statement. Hereupon the Ambassador withdrew.*

Although on the day of the declaration made by Asquith, I did not know of the details I have just described, I was astonished at the moderation of Asquith's tone.

England simplified the entire matter by accurately defining her own interests, denying all hostile intentions, and expressing hope of a peaceful solution.

Asquith spent the same evening in my house. He seemed much moved by the approbation his statements had called forth from all parties in Parliament. The demonstration in the House of Commons had made all the greater an impression, taking place on the day after a sitting which in its stormy proceedings exceeded anything that had taken place in the House of Commons during the last hundred years.

Asquith explained the mystery by telling me, that the wording of the declaration had been formulated by the Cabinet Council at the last moment, as a result, and under the impression of statements made to Grey, not by Count Metternich, but by Kühlmann.

Nothing could be more amazing, said the Prime Minister, than the complete change of language and attitude.

Without reference of any kind to former conversations, Kühlmann had merely announced the conciliatory and peaceable intentions of the Berlin Cabinet, asking the British Government to support Germany in these endeavours. Asquith told me, the British Government was bound to consider this request, and his statements in Parliament had been the result. In reality, the relations between Germany and France had changed but little, and England's standpoint had remained precisely the same, but the sudden tension that had sprung up between England and Germany had vanished. *For, there is no use concealing the fact—one step further, and a war between England and Germany would have broken out as a result of the Franco-German dispute, although independent of it.*

This is the position today: *The conflict between France and Germany still exists. England's attitude remains unchanged, but an immediate conflict between England and Germany has been averted owing to the declarations of Germany. The impression prevails here, that Germany has also adopted a more conciliatory attitude towards France. It is believed that, even though Germany does not intend to abandon her claim to serious concessions from France, she does not, under any circumstances, desire war.*

It is extremely difficult to find an explanation for the former attitude of Germany, as well as for the subsequent change. I confess, I can find but one reason: *Germany was entirely mistaken in her estimate of the English attitude. The increasing popularity enjoyed by Germany in England, of which there can be no doubt, although up to the present it is only superficial, must finally outweigh the popularity of the Entente, as Berlin seemed to believe.*

Such an assumption might be based on the language of a part of the English press, and of several political personalities, even among the Conservatives; on the influence of Jewish high finance; on the warmth of the reception accorded Emperor William, whose powers of imagination may have obscured his political judgment; on the fact that the Liberal Party, always more peaceably inclined than the Conservatives, are in power; and even on a certain split within the Cabinet itself.

This last hope was destroyed by the speech of Lloyd George, the leader of the Radical group in the Cabinet. For this reason, the speech made such an impression in Berlin and led to the inquiry by Count Metternich.

If this be true then it was all a tremendous error of judgment.

Apart from this explanation, the only assumption that can be made is, that it was believed in Berlin, that England, under the leadership of the Liberal Party, would renounce her position as a great Power in international questions and remain passive where her direct interests were not concerned.

So far as I know of Kiderlen-Wächter from the past, this may to a certain degree be the case.

In fact, Germany reckoned with England only as a secondary factor. *As the London Cabinet appeared in the foreground, Berlin attempted threats. Seeing that they led to no results, caution and moderation won the upper hand.*

In the course of my conversation, yesterday, with Nicolson, he told me that he believed the tension was past; the danger was exorcised; but the core of the question remained unaltered. The last interview between Kiderlen and Cambon had not, according to information he had received, led to the desired result; this would depend on the meeting which Cambon is to have today with Kiderlen after his return from Swinemünde.

(690) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Neratoff. Telegram, Aug. 3-16, 1911.*

I have just had a long talk with Kiderlen, the substance of which I will sum up. *The German Minister requests me to say to you how correct the attitude of Russia in the Morocco question has been up to now. If England had followed the Russian example, he said, our negotiations with France would have made further progress. The Secretary of State would entertain no doubt as to the ultimate result of these negotiations, if France would only cease threatening Germany with her Alliances, and would be more careful in preserving the stipulated secrecy of the negotiations. It was desirable that France should realize this, or that her friends should point it out to her.*

As concerns the actual state of the negotiations, I did not neglect to convey your views to Kiderlen. He replied, the negotiations were still in the stage of compensations proposed, rejected, and proposed anew. Yesterday, Cambon went to him with new plans. *The proposal suggested by Your Excellency; that German claims in Morocco be abandoned for concessions in the Congo has been agreed to by the Berlin Cabinet, in order to put an end, once for all, to the friction with France in Morocco. France seems to prefer the system of bargaining, which, as Kiderlen says, makes negotiations extremely unpleasant. The danger lies in the fact, that France is trying to represent the situation to the world in such a way as to make Germany appear compelled to yield to France's threat of appealing to her Allies for help.*

The Secretary of State's interview with the Emperor in Swinemünde leaves no doubt as to the fact, that the Emperor is not willing calmly to submit to the continual provocations of the French press.

(691) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Very Confidential Letter. Aug.* 3-16, 1911.

After we had discussed the Persian question, I asked Grey, whether he had news, regarding the progress of the Berlin negotiations. He answered:

"I am not altogether satisfied. The negotiations are dragging along, and I do not like this unnatural delay." [1]

He added, much would depend on what Berlin thought of the possible attitude of Russia and asked me:

"What would you do in case of complications?"

I told Sir Edward, I had not the right to give an official answer; *the Treaty Alliance between France and Russia existed in its full compass; war would certainly be a great misfortune for Russia; personally, however, I had not the slightest doubt but that the terms of the Treaty would be strictly carried out.*

In reply to my question today, Sir Edward said:

"I rather have the feeling that we are coming a little nearer together, but at bottom there is nothing new and no progress has been made."

I told him, I considered the campaign carried on by a part of the German press deplorable and dangerous, accusing Emperor William, as it does, in shameless terms of excessive moderation. Sir Edward said, he agreed with me, but he hoped, the press feud would soon find an end.

Then, he suddenly reverted to the question he had asked me a few days ago—*what would Russia do in case of complications?* I repeated my answer. Thereupon Sir Edward said:

"I will tell you why I believe one must know this. In the event of war between Germany and France, England would have to participate. If this war should involve Russia, Austria would be dragged in too, for, although she has not the slightest desire to interfere in this matter,[2] *she will be compelled by force of circumstances to do so.* There is no doubt that in such an event the situation in Albania will become aggravated. *Consequently, it would no longer be a duel between France and Germany—it would be general war."*

[1] Which aversion Grey never had in the Bagdad railroad and other matters of that sort.

[2] An interesting statement in so far as it indicates that little team work was being done by Vienna and Berlin.

Sir Edward then said to me:

"I do not believe, Emperor William wanted war, when this incident occurred; I do not believe, he wants war today. Even in case of the difficult situation mentioned above, it seems to me out of the question —if he bears in mind the frightful consequences of the general collision which he would be calling forth—that he could decide to go to war on account of such a question."

I cannot deny, that this breadth of view seems justified to me. I would emphasize that this conversation was a strictly confidential one.

(692) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Neratoff. Letter, Aug.* 5-18, 1911.

The enthusiasm which was aroused in certain Pan-German circles through the news of the sending of a German warship to Agadir has now given way to bitter dissillusion. The protracted negotiations with France, and the possibility of obtaining compensations for Germany only outside of Morocco, have embittered the German chauvinists. Several of the Liberal Conservative papers, chief among them the "Post," simply cannot restrain their ill humour. Without wishing to admit that Kiderlen could disappoint the hopes of the Nationalists, the "Post" has permitted itself to publish a very sharp article, to the effect, *that the State Secretary was obliged to abandon his plans and yield to the will of the Emperor, who has shown far too much moderation and forbearance in this question.* Notwithstanding the immediate denial in the official press, charging the "Post" not only with tactlessness, but with lack of patriotism as well, public opinion has shown a certain amount of sympathy with the feeling of disappointment displayed by the "Post."

Whatever the result of the present negotiations may be, in the soul of the German people will long remain the sting of wounded pride, because Germany has again yielded to England's effectual protest.

(693) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Confidential Letter, Aug.* 16-29, 1911.

The letter of our Berlin Ambassador (August 5-18) seems to illuminate in a particularly clean manner the influences at work in Germany as a result of the Moroccan crisis. The attitude of

mind described by him might have consequences which I regard as dangerous.

As our Ambassador says, the feeling is directed chiefly against England. This feeling has been aroused through the disappointment in chauvinistic circles, but, under similar circumstances, chauvinism in all countries usually retains the upper hand. The Berlin Cabinet found it advisable to inaugurate a diplomatic action with a demonstration at Agadir, thus openly designating Morocco as the object of German diplomacy. The disappointment became evident on the day when, in consequence of a number of deplorable indiscretions in the press, the public realized that the negotiations had reference not to Morocco, but to the Congo. This disappointment, which aggravates the entire situation, seems to me to be the inevitable result of the appearance of the "Panther" [1] at Agadir. *The dispatch of the German warship was bound to have one effect, which does not seem to have been foreseen in Germany: An absolutely clear statement of the English point of view.*

The London Cabinet declared, that it was not interested in the result of Franco-German negotiations, pertaining to African territory outside of Morocco, but that England, possessing special interests in Morocco, could not allow any decision in regard to Morocco to be made without her consent. This meant that Morocco would be excluded from the general colonial reorganization desired by Germany.

I believe, this all too unexpected attitude on the part of the London Cabinet, was bound to stir up hostile feeling in Germany against England.

It is not quite clear to me, why Berlin should have believed that France would remain isolated. *As concerns the question itself raised by Germany, she, undoubtedly, has legal arguments in her favor.* But I cannot explain, how she could hope that France, even if diplomatically isolated, would under threats, determine to give up an important colony in exchange for obligations assumed by Germany in Morocco—obligations which could be much more easily altered than a territorial concession. . . . .

On the day we received the news of the appearance of the "Panther" at Agadir, I met Kühlmann at the Foreign Office. I

[1] This oft-quoted *warship* was a small gunboat.

asked him, what he thought. He replied that he believed one would have to negotiate. I asked him whether Morocco or a Moroccan port came into question. He replied:

"Neither the one nor the other. In Germany a port is looked on as a big expense and a danger. Compensations will probably have to be sought elsewhere for the continuous advance of France in Morocco."

The value of this opinion lies in the fact, that it was given to me at the very start, by a clever and well-informed diplomat. A couple of days ago, I spent the evening with Metternich. We did not touch on this side of the question. *I only wished to know whether the rather general impression was true, that my German colleague had badly informed his Government. I always doubted it and I doubt it today more than ever. It appears to me that Berlin did not listen to his warning.*

In reply to my somewhat persistant reference to the dangers and inconveniences of such a demonstrative procedure, Metternich defended himself, but only feebly. He seemed thoroughly convinced that Germany had the right on her side in this matter; still, he did not appear particularly edified with his Government's method of diplomatic action, although he was not quite willing to concede this openly. He concluded with the words:

"I can only tell you, that I have regarded the matter from the beginning as very dangerous." [1]

We spoke of England rather than of France. I asked him what he thought of England's rôle. He said:

"The British Government does not want war, nor do they believe, Germany wants war. In Morocco, England has been more French than France, but nowhere else; England is not interested in the Congo, not even in regions beyond the Congo; and she would joyfully welcome a solution of the crisis, if it could be found in these latter regions."

I told him, this was my opinion too, adding that it would perhaps be well, if Germany would speak out quite plainly in regard to Morocco, and the rôle she would concede to France in that country. He contented himself with pointing out the tactical disadvantages of such declarations.

[1] It would be interesting to know what rôle Metternich played in documents 682 and 683.

(694) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Aug. 24 Sept. 6, 1911. No. 1180.*

Iswolsky tells me that Spain intends to occupy Ifni in Southern Morocco, and that this news has aroused great indignation in Paris. The French Ambassador here tells me such action on the part of Spain was expected and has not caused uneasiness. We should like to know whether the French Government was moved, by this occasion, to appeal to the London Cabinet, and whether the latter intends to take any steps to induce Spain to postpone her plans, till there has been a general clearing up of the situation in Morocco.

(695) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Aug. 25-Sept. 7, 1911. No. 198.*

Your telegram Nr. 1180 received.

After his return from Paris, Cambon told me, the French could not understand Spain's manner of procedure, as France was willing to grant all possible concessions. Far-reaching proposals had been made to the Madrid Cabinet. *The Spanish Ambassador here told me, these proposals were regarded at Madrid as unacceptable.* Owing to English remonstance, Spain had temporarily abandoned the idea of occupying Ifni; besides, Spanish rights in this port were secured by treaty. *Grey told the Ambassador, a few days ago, that he did not consider negotiations between Spain and France as expedient, until an understanding had been reached between France and Germany. He warned the Ambassador more especially against any rash steps.* The Ambassador, however, has told me that the occupation has only been postponed a few days, as in the autumn the occupation would be impossible owing to the unfavorable conditions for navigation. *Cambon appears to me to be rather uneasy in regard to the policy of Spain.*

(696) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Aug. 25-Sept. 7, 1911. No. 1187.*

Our Ambassador at Madrid telegraphs:

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs has explained to me, that the situation has entirely changed since our conversation of yesterday.

On behalf of his Government, the French Ambassador [1] has made the following verbal official declaration:

"'*France declares to Spain that no agreement will be possible, unless Spain renounces, once for all, the idea of occupying Ifni or any other point in the South.*'

"*The Minister told me, the King was indignant at this demand, declaring it was impossible for Spain to give up Ifni, this port having been ceded to Spain long ago by treaty.*

"A reply will be sent to France, after a Cabinet Council, but Garcia Prieto [2] told me confidentially, it was his personal opinion, that Spain might indemnify France by allowing her to settle at some point on the Southern coast, provided this point were not too close to the Canary Islands.

"The abrupt tone of the French communication has given offense here. The Minister of Foreign Affairs exclaimed:

"'*But this is really an ultimatum!*' whereupon the Ambassador replied: '*Not at all, we merely wish to avoid misunderstandings.*'"

(697) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Aug. 26-Sept. 8, 1911. No. 200.*

I asked Grey what he thought of the political situation between France and Spain. *He replied, the King, and the Spanish Government, had at first interpreted Geoffrey's declaration as an ultimatum. This was a misunderstanding which he hoped had been explained by this time; France was now awaiting the Spanish counter-proposals. Grey added, it must be borne in mind, that if the negotiations at Berlin led to no result, France, even though she obtained the consent of the other Powers, would have secured the recognition of her position in Morocco at the cost of very considerable concessions on her part; that, consequently, Spain, no matter what her historical rights might be, could not demand the preservation of these rights without being willing to make a sacrifice.*[3] *Grey added, he believed, Geoffrey was very peaceably inclined. I believe, England's attitude in this matter has been determined by the Anglo-French Entente.*[4]

[1] M. Geoffrey.
[2] Spanish minister of foreign affairs.
[3] A comfortable, but not highly moral, position.
[4] Which view seems reasonable.

(698) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Aug. 26-Sept. 8, 1911. No. 202.*

Cambon told me confidentially, on Wednesday, that his brother had discussed with Iswolsky the possibility of an Austrian proposal for mediation. *My colleague emphasized most decidedly that, in his opinion, the French Government could not accept such a proposal.* Today, Grey spoke of information he had received on the subject from Paris. Stating that his words were his personal opinion, and in no way bore the character of an official communication, he said that he would ultimately accept any proposition that, in the first place, would tend towards the preservation of peace, and, secondly, if necessary, exonerate France from the charge of conducting an aggressive policy. He was thinking of a Conference, but, in principle, he did not wish to exclude either mediation or a court of arbitration. *It was too early to speak of it as yet, but he did not believe, France could accept the mediation of a Sovereign allied with Germany.*

This idea was not practicable.

I told Grey, I had no information on the subject, but that a conversation between our Ambassadors at Paris seemed to indicate that such a project existed. I added, it must not be forgotten that Russia's position in this crisis was a particularly difficult one. *On the one hand, Russia was bound by a Treaty of Alliance, from which we, of course, had no intention of withdrawing; on the other hand, Russia would be surprised in the midst of her peaceful work by a war in which she would have to take part, although it scarcely involved interests of hers; in short, for reasons of high diplomacy, Russia would have to carry on a war which would be incomprehensible to public opinion.* Consequently, in this case, more than in any other, Russia must take into consideration all possible proposals, and leave nothing undone to make possible the preservation of a just peace. I added that I interpreted the conversation at Paris in this sense.

(699) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Aug. 25-Sept. 7, 1911. No. 1189.*

Our Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin telegraphed on August 24:

"Kiderlen told me today, that the French point of view, in respect of territorial concessions in the Congo would arouse no opposition; as concerns Morocco, the guarantees, which France is

willing to grant for the future free development of Germany's economic activity, must be accurately defined. The answer of the German Government will probably be presented to the French Ambassador on Thursday."

(700) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Aug. 27-Sept. 9, 1911. No. 203.*

Cambon told me, Grey's opinion in regard to the Kiderlen-Cambon conversation is that the negotiations will be long and tedious, but there is no reason, why a peaceful solution should not be finally reached. Cambon hopes, that, in formulating the ultimate text of the German counter-proposals, the previous exchange of views will be borne in mind; first and foremost, that a number of small bureaucratic details will be omitted. I am under the impression that a solution will be found; still, I fear that public opinion will become impatient if the negotiations be excessively protracted. *It is necessary, that our press should also exercise moderation and restraint.*

(701) *Neratoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Sept. 1-14, 1911. No. 1239.*

I am telegraphing to Paris:

"The German Chargé d'Affaires has declared to me, on behalf of his Government, that the rumours circulated by the press, to the effect that Germany, in her reply to the French proposals, respecting Morocco, will endeavor to obtain a privileged economic position, are entirely without foundation. Germany wishes only to obtain guarantees, that German trade and industry—and therewith European trade and industry—will occupy the same position as that enjoyed by France."

This explanation may assist France in formulating her counter-proposals.

(702) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Sept. 4-17, 1911. No. 1258.*

Our Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin telegraphed on September 3:

"Yesterday the French Ambassador presented to Kiderlen the French reply. The Secretary of State did not give a definite answer,

saying that such would be given on Monday. On the whole, Cambon received a favourable impression from the interview. In his opinion, one desires an understanding here, but does not wish to yield without bargaining. *A certain danger lies in the warlike atmosphere prevailing in some political circles of Paris and London."*

(703) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, Sept.* 7-20, 1911. *No.* 209.

Nicolson tells me, that, according to the last reports from Paris, the interview between Kiderlen and Cambon indicates decided progress, and gives reason for hope that a favorable solution will be found. Before seeing Nicolson, I spoke with my French colleague who expressed the same opinion. Both, however, have doubts as to whether the contemplated solution will satisfy public opinion in Germany and France, and they fear that a certain tension will be felt for some time.

(704) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Neratoff. Telegram, Sept.* 6-19, 1911.

Kiderlen and Cambon, both, told me this morning, that, after yesterday's interview, they believe that an understanding has been reached, on principle, as the differences of opinion still existing apply only to unimportant details. *Germany renounces her claim to economic privileges in Morocco and considers the guarantees given by France as sufficient. In respect of the Congo, an understanding on principle has also been reached, and Cambon regards the German answer given this evening as thoroughly satisfactory and acceptable.*

In the strictest confidence, however, he expressed to me his fears that the Paris Cabinet, under the influence of certain circles, holding special interests in the French Congo, might, at this critical moment, show an uncompromising spirit, which would bring to nought the agreement reached after so much difficulty. This influence finds most intense expression in some of the French papers, which point out that it would be impossible to cede to Germany any part of French territory. *Cambon asked me, therefore, confidentially, to use our influence with the Paris Cabinet, through the French Ambassador at St.*

Petersburg and our Ambassador at Paris, to persuade them to accept the German proposals, which he considered thoroughly acceptable and in conformity with French interests. Cambon expressed the hope that our measures would meet with success. The German answer has already been presented to the French Government.

Kiderlen expressed to me his satisfaction as to the approaching conclusion of the long drawn-out negotiations, and added that these were rendered much more difficult by the defiant tone of the French press. *In the last few days, several violent attacks on Germany have been published, which have aroused great excitement here, and may cause the Government, at the last moment, to withdraw from a conclusion of the agreement with France.*

For my part, I consider it very important in the interest of general peace, that, at the present stage of the negotiations between France and Germany, everything be avoided which might stand in the way of a favourable conclusion; under this head I include the defiant newspaper articles in the French press, and, to a certain extent, in our own press, which are devoid of all political tact.

(705) *The Russian Ambassador at Rome to Neratoff. Confidential Letter, Oct.* 11-24, 1911.

The events of the past summer must evoke grave anxiety everywhere. *An apparently insignificant incident,*[1] *like the appearance of the "Panther" at Agadir, was able to call European peace into question.* Even though Germany and France succeeded in maintaining peace, public opinion in Italy is stronger than the Government, and who can guarantee, that in future the appearance of a gunboat somewhere, in disputed waters may not involve results which all the Powers are striving to postpone, *though perhaps not always quite honestly.*

Germany's effort to create for herself, in case of war, as favorable a terrain as possible is certainly deserving of emulation. I have talked to Barrère of late on this subject. He has informed me of plans which are being worked out in the French General Staff, the technical details

[1] Paris and London would not have thanked the Russian ambassador for calling the "Panther" incident "insignificant."

of which are probably already known to us.[1] *He says that Germany, lacking confidence in the "benevolent neutrality of Belgium" is trying to secure for herself a flanking of the French right wing by way of Switzerland. This attempt to draw Switzerland into the struggle, shows Germany's disappointment in regard to the assistance to be expected from Italy.*

The Treaties concluded between Italy and France remain as secret as before. Still one is acquainted with their contents. It has not escaped the attention of Italy's Allies, that the regiments sent from Northern Italy to Tripoli have been taken from the French, not from the Swiss or Austrian frontier.[2] . . . .

In order to weaken the opposing side, France and England will have to find a means of inducing Italy to enter into a more active understanding. Both, Barrère and Rodd, realize this necessity, and are seeking some means for its attainment. The altered strategic position of Italy, the care with which the preparations are being made for the expedition to Tripoli, public opinion which is not friendly to Germany, the fears aroused by the policy of Switzerland—all these things make it appear most particularly desirable to England and France, that Italy's support be obtained in case of war.

If, after the end of the Tripolitan War, France and England should have arrived at the agreements mentioned, we too shall then have to consider what advantages would accrue to us from a *rapprochement* **with Italy. The substance of our agreements with Italy would have to be as follows: The attempt must be made to divert from our frontier a part of the Austrian forces which otherwise would be employed against us.**[3]

As I have already mentioned in my reports, the Italy of today no longer represents that factor which would make it appear desirable to

[1] These plans concerned especially Belgium, and provided, among other features, for the landing of British troops in Belgium, and the invasion by French troops of that country, in case of war against Germany.

[2] A measure which caused great excitement in Berlin and Vienna government circles at the time, confirming what had been suspected and leading to an agitation in Germany in favor of a new international orientation. The abandonment of Austria was advocated more than ever, because Italy's attitude was due largely to the anti-Austrian sentiments of the Italian public.

[3] This very remarkable document contains every provision made by the general staffs of the Entente governments.

us that Italy remain in the Triple Alliance for the purpose of acting as a dead weight to her Allies.

(706) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Neratoff. Letter, Sept.* 30-*Oct.* 13, 1911.

After three months tedious negotiations, in the course of which the situation several times became so acute that it almost brought about a rupture, an agreement in regard to Morocco has at last been reached. It is to be ascribed mainly to two circumstances: *First, Emperor William, at the first outbreak of the crisis, resolved not to let it come to war; and, secondly, the Ambassador of the French Republic here has displayed unusual cleverness and tact.* He had to fight simultaneously with an extremely strong opponent at Berlin, the German Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and a very strong opponent at Paris [1]—the influence of those political circles whose object was to prevent an understanding with Germany.

It is to be hoped that the two factors mentioned above will also contribute to a satisfactory solution . . . . regarding the Congo.

(707) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Telegram, Oct.* 12-25, 1911. *No.* 153.

The negotiations concerning the Congo are nearing an end. In the main points, an understanding has been reached. Thanks to a very far-sighted combination, Germany obtains access to the Congo and Ubangi Rivers, without communications being interrupted between the northern and southern territorial regions belonging to France. A slight difference of opinion, in regard to the extent of the territory to be ceded by Germany in the North, is unimportant and will soon be adjusted. *The French Minister of Foreign Affairs does justice to the moderation shown by Germany during the second stage of the negotiations.*

(708) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Letter, Nov.* 8-21, 1911.

If at the time of the Morocco crisis it was impossible to discover in England even the slightest opposition to the standpoint

[1] Delcassé.

of the Government, namely, that, in a given case, England would support France by force of arms, it cannot be denied that since quiet has been restored, a certain reaction is making itself felt in various circles—pacifist circles which are to be found scattered among all parties, though chiefly among the left wing of the Radicals.

I do not wish to ascribe any special significance to this movement. I am rather inclined to believe, it is a question of a reaction after a tremendously severe strain, and I do not believe that this movement will be permanent. The great Government parties represented in Parliament —the Conservative Unionists and the Liberals—give no reason for such a belief.

The argument of the above described movement may be summed up as follows: *Twice in two years, England has been almost compelled to resort to arms, in regard to questions which did not affect her interests. Two wars might have been the result of the Entente. A political isolation would have been more advantageous.*

A letter by Stead, appearing in the "Standard," illumines this question. I enclose a copy of this letter. I report this new orientation chiefly for the sake of completeness, but also because a tendency exists here, from which German diplomacy will certainly seek to derive an advantage, mainly through exaggerating the importance of this tendency.[1]

I must add that this opposition, based on the theory that the Government does not keep Parliament sufficiently informed in regard to foreign policy, is calculated to aggravate the attacks on Sir Edward Grey's Persian policy.

(709) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 17-30, 1911. *No.* 298.

Despite the fact that, after Grey's last speech in the House of Commons, all serious opposition to his foreign policy seemed to have been overcome, this opposition has now raised its head again. It is principally to be found among the extreme left. I have learnt, from a reliable source, that a proposal has been made from this side to the Conservative Party to overthrow Grey. This pro-

[1] A chronic failing of German diplomatists and statesmen.

posal was categorically declined, but it is symptomatic. This opposition attacked, first of all, the speech which Lloyd George delivered, which was based on information received from the French Government, which fact Grey could not have communicated to Parliament, without committing an indiscretion. *In his speech, Grey emphasized that he was willing to enter into new Ententes, but not to the detriment of those already existing. This utterance has also been attacked. It appears, that the opposition of which I speak is mainly pro-German and inclines towards Germany. In addition, there is the opposition to the common Anglo-Russian policy in Persia.* It is not really dangerous, taken as a whole, and a Government crisis is not probable, but the circumstances I have mentioned, compel Grey to exercise great prudence. I am telegraphing this to you, because I know Grey is troubled, and also in order to enable you to judge for yourself the situation which might result from every crisis in the Anglo-Russian relations.

(710) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Letter, Dec. 7-20, 1911.*

(After a general description of the Franco-German negotiations, in regard to Morocco, the letter concludes:)

Finally, the occurrences just described have also proved various political truths, concerning which doubt has hitherto existed. The crisis of 1908, respecting Bosnia, aroused in the public opinion of Europe a certain lack of confidence in the strength and efficacy of the Triple Entente. *But now, this Alliance, which originated under the influence of historical necessity, has not only demonstrated its inner strength, but has also shown that it is in a position to act in favour of the preservation of general peace. In this respect, it is extremely noteworthy, that, in those critical summer days, England, without being bound to France by a formal Act, was prepared to mobilize not only her entire Fleet, but also her Expeditionary Army against Germany. Should it not be ascribed to the resolute attitude of the three Entente Powers, that Germany showed that compliance which finally led to the signature of the Agreement of November 4?*

In ascribing the preservation of the peace to the common action of the three Powers, I do not indulge in optimism as to the future. *After the crisis just experienced, the political situation of Europe is*

less secure than ever. Beyond all doubt, any local collision between the Powers is bound to lead to a general European conflict, in which Russia, like every other European Power, will have to participate. With God's help, the conflict may be postponed for a while, but that it may come at any moment we must bear in mind, hour by hour, and we must also arm against it, hour by hour.[1]

[1] This document is all the more remarkable because of M. Iswolsky's firm determination to create the Greater Russia by hook or crook, in bringing under the same political roof all Slavs in existence—those in the Balkans, in Austria-Hungary and in Germany, and by seizing Constantinople and her straits and laying all of Asia Minor under tribute to Russia, if annexation should have proven inexpedient. What Iswolsky depicted in December of 1911 came true to a dot in July and August of 1914. Though the Russian ambassador at Paris and former Russian minister of foreign affairs has been credited with the statement that the Great War was his war, the more interesting fact is that Documents Nos. 710 and 712 make it perfectly clear that, even if there had been no men to continue the Entente policies of that period, December, 1911—February, 1912, as here outlined, only the most radical change in foreign relations and international tendencies could have prevented the great World War.

VII

THE ARMAMENT CRISIS AND THE HALDANE MISSION

(November 1911—May 1912)

(711) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Letter, Nov. 9-22,* 1911.

In one of my previous letters, I have informed Your Excellency that in Parliament the opposition to Sir Edward Grey's policy is growing. As I have the fullest confidence in his ascendency over Parliament, I would not have attached any special importance to this state of affairs, had I not made observations in other quarters about which I will give you some details. *In public opinion, and in the press of Germany and England, there exists the settled impression that the relations between the two countries have never been so strained as lately, and that they are still so.*

I am of the opinion that one must not attach too much importance to this, at all events as regards the future. It is, however, true that the attempts at a *rapprochement,* of which I have spoken to Your Excellency, have suddenly come to a standstill, or rather have been interrupted. *It is true that passions have been aroused, and, that not only the tone of the press, but, likewise, that of diplomacy, has assumed a sharpness of tone hitherto unknown. And it is just this fact which gives me cause for reflection. For, if, on the one hand, England has the fullest confidence in the future of the mighty Russian realm—a confidence which strengthens our position here—it is not to be denied, that England and Germany have a certain respect for each other, so that, in certain matters, they follow each other's lead, and in many points admire each other. In order to express myself still clearer—neither the one, nor the other have the same admiration for France.*

Latest events have brought it about, that both States have, of

a sudden, stood opposed one to the other. It was impossible to go further. They had taken each other's measures. That the opposition was accentuated thereby is evident, but this might easily change. Public life in England is difficult to understand and to judge, but the full freedom of its development implies that certain currents develop more rapidly here than elsewhere. *I should be astonished, if a reaction in the spirit of a rapprochement were not to develop out of this crisis, and this might be the case quicker than is generally believed.* I think that the parliamentary opposition, to which I have alluded, is in a way a sign of this. *On the other hand, attempts to effect a reconciliation have already been made beyond doubt; and they come, moreover, from Germany. I do not wish to draw any exaggerated deductions from the above. As the parliamentary opposition supports the Entente policy of Sir Edward Grey, to which the King is just as attached as his late father, there has been created a guaranty for the continuance of Grey's policy.* But for me there is no doubt, that, should this policy, for one reason or another, have to be given up, the isolation of England would lead to her reconciliation with Germany.

This is the reason, why Grey is so anxious to be able to answer all interpellations in Parliament, and to emphasize the success of his policy in the interests of peace. For that reason, I regret the incident in Persia, which has, unfortunately, assumed, in this politically so unpropitious moment, a certain importance.[1]

(712) *The Same to the Same. Letter, Jan. 26-Feb. 8, 1912.*

I have repeatedly reported to Your Excellency my views on English politics, though only in fragmentary form, and I now beg your permission to condense the sum total of my observations in this letter.

I can find no better starting point, than to remind you of the words which Grey addressed to me a few weeks ago. After developing the trend of thought as to how important it was, that our co-operation in Persia should be maintained, the Minister added almost verbatim:

[1] The ruthless military measures of the Russians against the unarmed and peaceable Persians had led to severe criticisms of Grey's policy in the British House of Commons.

"On the day on which our co-operation, a mutual support, can no longer be maintained, our Convention, too, would become null and void. The breach of that Convention would signify the break-up of the Entente. And if the Entente should disappear, English policy would have to consider a new orientation, in which case one must not be astonished by the rapid change in the public mind.

"In that case I should retire, for it would not be desirable for me to remain in office."

Those last words could only signify that, in so far as his own person was concerned, he does not approve of any such change, that he would consider it harmful to English interests and would not support it.

With remarkable clearness of perception, peculiar to him, Sir Edward Grey had, in a few words, described a situation which, however, at that period had not yet arisen. We do not as yet have to face such a change, and the Convention and the Entente may not only be maintained, but may even take still stronger roots, on condition that the present Persian crisis be solved in a manner which accords with the common interests of Russia and England, and that that solution be rapidly found in order that the Entente be maintained.

But to-day I will not write to Your Excellency about Persian affairs. I repeat: We do not as yet have to face the change which Sir Edward feared. But one must not blink a fact which is all too apparent here in London. *Public sentiment is beginning to sum up the political balance sheet of the Entente policy. In spite of its political maturity and experience, the English public resembles all other publics—its judgment is not deep—it remains on the surface. It is not a question here of a few Socialists and Radicals, nor of a steady influencing of the press from the other side of the water.*[1] *It is a matter of sentiment, which is showing itself in quite different circles, even amongst the Conservatives.*

One no longer sees clearly the aim of our policy in Persia, our relations towards Germany are also not quite understood. This uncertainty very often revives the question of the "Road to India."[2] *One thinks*

[1] Count Benckendorff makes much mention elsewhere, of the efficacy of German press propaganda, but seems to have changed his mind somewhat.

[2] The political and national nightmare of the British.

of the Islamic world and fears are expressed concerning the impression of some of the measures we have taken.

As regards France, conditions brought about by the fall of the Caillaux Cabinet, exaggerated though they were, astonished English public opinion, and have, to some degree, set in doubt the hitherto unshaken faith in the loyalty of France to the Entente.

Above all, the English public, now that the European crises are at an end, and good temper has been restored, is astonished at the perception that twice England has been on the brink of a terrible war, and this for reasons which,—in a rather shortsighted way—it could only indirectly connect with the interests of England, whilst the rôle of France in the Balkan crisis appears rather dubious, and Russia's attitude, during the Morocco question, also, was not as determined as that of England.

The Entente, which, up to now, had been considered a guarantee for peace, is this no longer in the same measure as at first believed. And the thought "Would not an agreement with Germany be more advantageous for England" comes to me as an echo from a quarter whence I would never have expected it, and gives vent to an opinion which six or eight months ago would have been impossible.

The words which I have quoted are, however, beyond the instinct of the public, and above all beyond that of public utterances. *It is true that several important Committes have been actually formed, and that already the entire Liberal, and part of the Conservative press, have openly entered the lists for an improvement of Anglo-German relations.* This desirable improvement naturally signifies a certain understanding, without however discarding existing agreements. In this sense, Lloyd George expressed himself in a public speech. This, however, would signify at the same time that, should the Entente with Russia or France fail (and the Entente with Russia stands as the decisive factor), the agreement with Germany would be further widened.

Permit me to introduce a reflection here. *At first sight it may appear strange, that the hostility against Germany, which was so strong a few months ago, that at the moment when war threatened it was almost unanimous, should now have toned down so rapidly. The enmity remains; Germany, if not an enemy, is still a menace. Germany is held responsible for the fact that the navies must be constantly augmented.* Feelings have been assuaged sufficiently to admit of the possibility

of a change, at least in a measure, to render the construction of additional Dreadnoughts unnecessary. The reason why feelings have calmed down more rapidly here than in Germany—where anti-English sentiment is still at highest pitch—is to be sought in the fact, that, here in England, people feel to have scored a success, whilst in Germany rather the contrary is the case. *England is there accused of having caused a German failure, which has been veiled diplomatically. Success is calming; failure exasperates.*

Apart from that, the excitement in Germany appears to me to be aroused by the obstinacy with which England adheres to her ententes with Russia and France. When Austria, under the protection of Germany, threatened Russian interests in the Balkans, England supported us; and she showed Germany her teeth, when the latter, basing unjustified hopes on English neutrality, moved against French interests in Morocco. In Germany we hear again and again: "England is always against us." They do not wish to admit that England has her own interests in Constantinople and Saloniki to defend, as also on the Moroccan coasts.

This anti-English spirit in Germany, naturally, entails serious difficulties, even as regards a conditional understanding between the two countries. But what would happen should one of the *ententes,* especially that with Russia, be dissolved? The answer is self-evident. *I am convinced that the enmity against England would disappear, and as rapidly transform itself into a spirit of conciliation, as is already the case to-day with a portion of English public opinion.*

It is stated, that the personal feelings of Emperor William have been particularly hurt. If that be the case, and I believe it is, it must be attributed to the cause I have just mentioned.

If a breach should occur in one of the English *ententes,* then, Germany's policy would have to record a striking success, for that is the goal which she has kept in view ever since the existence of these *ententes.* Germany is looking for the weak spot in the armor, and I am not disinclined to think that she imagines she has found it in Persia. If the manner, in which the German press makes capital out of our difficulties, and the way in which it exaggerates these, had not already convinced me, it would be proved to me by the conversations I have had with Count Metternich, and his judgment concerning these difficulties.

An open breach between us and England in Persia, an unfavourable vote in the English Parliament, provoked by some incident in our negotiations, would put an end to Sir Edward Grey's career and would at the same time assuage the bitterness of Kaiser Wilhelm. He would then be able, once more, to resume his personal action in England, which has always outstripped public opinion in his own country. I believe, I do not err in this assumption. Is it not the most natural thing in the world? Germany has been in error about the so-called aggressive aims of the Entente Policy. The "Iron Ring," which has become proverbial, is based upon a fallacy.[1] *So far as I am aware, the Russian Government has not attempted to interfere with the legitimate interests of Germany, when she has not attempted to oppose ours. On the other hand, Sir Edward Grey, publicly as well as to me personally, has constantly denied that he wished to isolate Germany. He has repeated to me that every attempt to destroy the Triple Alliance would be a mistake. In his opinion the isolation of Germany would signify an actual danger to the cause of peace.*

It is, however, true, that every time the German Government strove to advance its interests in regions in which other Powers were interested, it found itself face to face, not with one Power, but with a group of powers.[2] . . . .

To sum up: There is a general desire to improve relations without going further. The necessity for the continuance of the Entente is admitted. The entente with Russia, which is less emphasized, is, nevertheless, the actual basis. I believe that the Entente with France would not be of the same importance to England should our own be dissolved.

But it is not to be disputed that public opinion in general feels that the Ententes have up to the present not led to the results which had been hoped for and that, above all things, they have not established sufficient order and full security.

If I write at such great length on this subject, it is because in the end British Governments, no matter how faithful they may be to the obligations they have assumed—and I think this was never

[1] Elsewhere in these documents, Count Benckendorff contradicts himself; his remarkably good judgment seems to have been beclouded on this very essential point.

[2] Compare this statement with the one singled out by the preceding foot note.

more the case than with the present Cabinet—will nevertheless be dependent upon public opinion. The decision lies in the hands of the latter. *Even though public opinion in England places a higher degree of confidence in the Government than is usually the case in other countries, yet one must beware not to stretch this point too far.* For that reason, I have always emphasized the great importance of always giving Grey the possibility of publicly explaining the measures adopted by us, and of proving that the interests of England have been considered. *Naturally our own freedom of action is thereby in no wise impaired, but this is, in my opinion, the natural consequence of every entente and every Convention.*

I will not close this letter without casting a glance upon the situation, as it would develop with regard to Russia and our international relations, if, contrary to all expectations, the agreement regarding Persia and the Entente with England should be abrogated. It seems to me that not sufficient consideration has been given this question in Russia. *I believe that we are altogether too lightly disposed to assume that we still have Germany, should England, or even France, abandon us. I must not conceal from Your Excellency my firm conviction, that such is not the case, at least not with regard to the future. Germany would finally place herself at the side of England. For Russia this would mean isolation and re-grouping of the powers, the main body of which would be formed by England and Germany, with the inevitable result that Russian interests would no longer be considered.*

I do not wish to exaggerate, nor ascribe Machiavellian intentions to anyone. I have always been of the opinion, that excessive suspiciousness is a bad councillor in politics. I do not think that England would intentionally make her position more difficult, by reverting to a policy of constant friction with us.[1] *Such was once the special characteristic of English policy, but it is no longer such.*

On the other hand, I have faith in the traditional and personal sentiments of Emperor Wilhelm towards ourselves. If the Entente should continue, and our former relations with Germany be re-established, up to a certain point, our interests would certainly be served, if a *modus vivendi* existed between Germany and England. *Even in the case of a complete change which would follow upon a*

[1] "The Road to India."

breach between England and Russia, it is my opinion that Emperor Wilhelm would strive to maintain his relations with us.

But what would be our actual position? I can only vouchsafe a general answer in this already far too lengthy letter.

England finds herself at the head of an immense colonial empire which suffices to satisfy her activities, her enterprise and her capital. This empire is in the midst of transformation and internal development, which often progress with extraordinary swiftness, as for instance, in Canada and India. England is satiated with land, so that as soon as she has acquired new territory,—and we know at the price of what efforts —she is prepared to restore its autonomy.[1] . . . .

À propos **of the Morocco question, when the German Ambassador remarked to the English Minister:**

"The world is being divided up, we are more hemmed in than all others, we too have a claim to a share in the booty," *these words may be said to have expressed a certain truth. It is no mystery with what success Germany, after her victories, and the consolidation of her power has developed her internal power. Though very wealthy, she is still more enterprising than wealthy; she requires capital. England can only furnish her this in insufficient amounts, but France would be able to accomplish this, and, when England has once acquiesced, it will not be long before the French market will be open to Germany.*[2] *Not without ambition to increase her colonial possessions, Germany, nevertheless, follows rather the road of peaceful penetration by confining herself principally to vast undertakings, in which, however, she always meets the opposition of England. It is true that Russia's weight in the scale is of great importance, but in overseas undertakings England herself alone is the greatest hindrance.*

To me the most striking proof of this seems to be the Bagdad railway. In my opinion, the rôle, which this undertaking is destined to play in world politics, is far more important than one would at first glance imagine. The interest which it arouses in Germany, includes the whole nation. In financing the project, almost the whole of Europe, even England, had a share. And yet it is chiefly England who places obstacles

[1] It would seem that Count Benckendorff's remarkable mind had not sufficiently analyzed the fundamental principle of British imperialism, consisting of economic overlordship in all possible cases.

[2] Extraordinary as this statement must seem, it identifies a fact, nevertheless. See documents which deal with the political control of French investments.

in the way. It is often repeated in England—and this is the opinion of her leading politicians of the Conservative as well as the Liberal Party, of the men at present in power, as well as the former ones—*that one of the greatest obstacles to the conclusion of an Anglo-German agreement lies in the lack of a basis, in the absence of concrete questions for negotiations. This appears to me exaggerated. I believe that the Bagdad railway might very easily form such a basis. Several attempts at negotiations have already taken place, but the international obligations of England, above all her want of good-will,*[1] *have never allowed the negotiations to be continued. It would be otherwise, if England, deprived of our support, should resolve to display the necessary good-will and modify her present demands, should she see in an agreement with Germany one of those safeguards which she believes to be necessary to her.*

That might also come true, even without a breach of the Triple Entente, but under other conditions and without the consequences for ourselves as above described.

But should the Entente be once broken up, this would signify for Germany that the one agreement would lead also to others. Persia would be opened to her industries and commerce, Asia Minor would fall within her sphere of influence. *Germany would naturally encounter Russian opposition, but, on this occasion, Russia would be isolated and, mighty as she is, we must admit that she is still poorly equipped for an economic competition.*[2]

By means of an agreement with England, the influence of Germany in Constantinople would be augmented. It is true that Germany would have to share this influence with England, but the lion's share would have fallen to the former, and *it would be astonishing if Turkey were not to place herself entirely on the German side.*

I should not like to weary the attention of Your Excellency by carrying this parallel further—for one may extend it wherever English and German enterprise encounter one another, and wherever there is room for compromises.

We must finally also consider how important, in the public

[1] Thus spoke Count Benckendorff, a man to whom the Entente was a religion.
[2] The reason why Russia, and with her the Entente, resorted to *political means* to promote their commercial interests.

opinion of both nations, the question of the constant increase of the navies is. *True, it is purely a financial question, but it is precisely this financial side, which constantly occupies the attention of the German and English tax-payers and calls their attention again and again to the same point. I believe that the naval question is destined to exercise great influence. I do not believe that it can be solved directly by means of any diplomatic document. An improvement of the relations between the two nations would not be sufficient.* I believe that it can be settled finally only as the result of a complete agreement.

All this would be to the advantage of Germany, for England the business would be poor. And England could be brought to conclude such an agreement only by force of necessity. . . . .

(713) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan. 26-Feb. 8, 1912. No. 27.*

In consequence of an indisposition, I have only to-day been able to call on Sir E. Grey, as he had asked me to do. He read me a telegram, which he had sent to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, concerning Haldane's journey to Berlin. Grey added no comment. He merely remarked, that he thought that a relaxation of the tension between England and Germany would only serve the cause of universal peace; that the great obstacle to this was the constantly increasing naval armaments; that on several occasions an exchange of views between the two Governments had taken place without having, however, led to any practical result.

The last German overtures reached London just before the Agadir incident, which necessarily entailed a long delay in the English reply. That answer was sent to Berlin only in January. It referred to subordinate questions. But these mutual communications mark such insignificant progress, that no material could so far be found for diplomatic negotiations through the Ambassadors. *He, Grey, cherished no illusions concerning the difficulties of a settlement; yet it has, nevertheless, occurred to the London Cabinet, that sentiment in Berlin was in such a mood that a private exchange of views with one of the leading English statesmen, on the occasion of a private journey, might be useful and call forth no objections.*

Grey said to me, that Haldane was entrusted with the task of informing Berlin what was thought in London concerning the

armaments question and to communicate the reply he received *ad referendum* to London. I asked Grey, whether Haldane would touch upon that one question only. Grey replied that if Bethmann brought up other subjects, Haldane was instructed to listen to what the Chancellor had to say and then to report. *Grey added that this communication was to be regarded as strictly confidential. He had spoken in the same sense to Cambon.*[1]

(714) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, Jan. 27-Feb. 9, 1912.*

Our Naval Attaché is leaving to-morrow morning for St. Petersburg. I have no time to give you a more detailed report, concerning the contents of my telegrams of yesterday. Among those telegrams that concerning Lord Haldane's journey to Berlin requires certain explanatory remarks.

Two days in succession, Grey had asked me to call upon him. In consequence of an indisposition this was impossible and it was only yesterday that I was able to speak to him.

The Minister at once said that he wanted to talk to me about this journey, just as he had done two days ago with Cambon. He then read me his telegram to Buchanan.

He then informed me of various communications, which had been exchanged at long intervals with the Berlin Cabinet, regarding the naval armaments. The latest English reply, which had been delayed, owing to the Morocco incident, was despatched two weeks ago. As Sir Arthur Nicolson told me later, it dealt with the question of "Naval Intelligence." Sir Edward said, that the naval question comes more and more into the foreground, and excites public opinion in England as much as in Germany. The communications just alluded to had produced no results which could form a point of departure for diplomatic negotiations. *Moreover, many legends had come into being in Germany,*[2] *concerning the real intentions of English policy, as well as concerning the measures which the English Government was prepared to resort to, as for instance a sudden attack upon the German fleet—a state of mind which blocked the usual diplomatic way.*

[1] French ambassador at London.

[2] Were they legends? Moreover, there was the example of the British raid on Copenhagen.

On the other hand, the Minister drew my attention to the circumstance, that, both among the English public and also in Parliament, there were certain influences at work, which consider such a tension unfounded and pernicious. In order to find a way out, it was necessary to employ a qualified and competent mediator, one not connected with ordinary diplomacy, *who would reveal English policy in its true light at Berlin*[1] *and point out how harmful the continuous growth of armaments could become.*

The latest English communication had met with a very encouraging reception, and, on that account, the British Cabinet had decided to send Lord Haldane—who intended to go to Berlin with his brother about some educational questions—*to see Bethmann-Hollweg, to discuss matters with him, and to explain to him the aims and motives of the British Government, but not in an official manner.*

Lord Haldane, Sir Edward told me, would develop the point of view of the London Cabinet in the matter of naval armaments in the frankest manner and would report the reply he would receive. I asked Sir Edward, whether no other questions would be raised. The Minister replied that, if the Chancellor brought up other subjects for discussion, Lord Haldane was to listen to him and to transmit the German points of view *ad referendum* to London.

Sir Edward added, that, in view of the existing relations between England, Russia and France, he would keep both Governments fully informed about the real condition of affairs in order to clearly establish the aims of the London Cabinet—namely to attempt to remove the harmful strain in the relations of both countries, and further to make an effort *to inaugurate new relations with Germany, similar to those existing between Russia and Germany, and between France and Germany.*[2]

(715) *The Same to the Same. Personal Letter, Jan.* 28-*Feb.* 10, 1912.

I must not confine myself to the official report regarding Haldane's mission which is naturally regarded as the event of the day.

[1] Study document No. 716.

[2] Considering what these relations were at that time, as shown by these documents, Grey's plan could not be called a very comprehensive one—or did he mean to be facetious?

The arrival of Sir E. Goschen[1] *at London, bearing certain encouraging communications on the part of Germany, was the starting-point, even before the King and the Prime Minister had returned to town.* On the very day on which the King and Asquith returned—last Monday—it became necessary to reach a decision. Grey invited Cambon and me to call upon him on Tuesday. I do not know the contents of the communication which Goschen brought with him from Berlin, *but the gist of the matter, which is regarded, perhaps, more seriously in Berlin than in London,* but which has awakened an echo here, is as follows:

As a matter of fact, for some time, Berlin and London have not been on "speaking terms" in a diplomatic sense, particularly since last June. *Neither special nor general questions formed the subject of negotiations.* Even the Bagdad question has not given rise to diplomatic negotiations and has so far been discussed only by mediators. A tension of this kind might have continued without any immediate danger, had not two considerations come into play—first, the anti-English feeling in Germany, which might have become even more intense, chiefly in my opinion, because Germany suffers from the impression of a failure for which she holds England responsible. A similar feeling which prevailed here, had been considerably lessened under the impression of having achieved a success.

But the chief, and almost immediate, consideration was that, at the opening of the parliamentary sessions in London and Berlin, it was necessary to bring up the question of a further increase in the navies, whereby the danger of serious complications, in view of the present excited state of mind, was by no means excluded.

I do not know if this is the point of view adopted in Germany; but I am, on the contrary, certain that the matter has been interpreted in this way in London, not otherwise, and not exceeding this. It is possible that the new Reichstag is no longer so compliant an instrument in the hands of the German Government and that it may be, that, after all, Berlin has reckoned far too much with an unlimited duration of the Persian difficulties. However that may be, a private exchange of opinion seemed most desirable before entering upon negotiations, and it was, perhaps, even necessary in order to smooth the ground. *It is a fact, that Berlin made use of a still more*

[1] British ambassador at Berlin.

direct way. I am informed, from a reliable source, that it was given to understand that Emperor William would be glad to see Lord Haldane in Berlin. However this choice may have taken place, it cannot be denied that it is an excellent one.

No German would have been more the right man in the right place in England than Lord Haldane in Berlin. All the political parties of England have confidence in him. This is known in Berlin, where he is also esteemed for his personal qualities which are well-known to Emperor William. This advantage has apparently induced London to rise superior to one difficulty which, after all, is only of subordinate significance in this instance—it was allowed to appear as if London had taken the first step.

I must add that Grey belongs to that small number of political leaders, who uphold the point of view that the question of armaments may be regulated by a direct agreement. There remains only the question: In what manner? Naturally I cannot foretell the result, though Churchill's speech of yesterday may perhaps indicate a possibility. This speech means, that, if England is to negotiate, she will do this only upon the basis of that relation between the two navies, which she deems necessary for her security —and upon no other basis. Once this relation has been achieved and recognized, it will not be necessary to build more ships. Seen in this light, the question is an extraordinarily complicated one. *For in this connection, England wishes neither to give nor to take "tips."*

There exists an obstacle of a very serious nature. It is my opinion, that the beginning of this entire affair has been dragged too much into the glare of publicity, so that in the event of failure, the situation would be worse than before. Should there be some result—and my opinion is shared by Cambon—I see nothing in this which could disquiet us. Rather the contrary—the world will be quieter. Should I need further proof, I would find it in the obvious relief felt by Grey and Nicolson at the restoration of the conformity of our views regarding Persia. They told me this without any circumlocution, and declared to Cambon that they were extraordinarily well satisfied. It must, however, be said that this was achieved not a single day too soon. We must not cherish any illusions. Public opinion would vacillate and it is important that things should now develop normally.

In this connection, the policy of opposition to the Government will be a mere trick and need occasion us no further concern. Haldane's mission will reconcile Grey with his own party which is, above all, pacifist. On the other hand, this mission will call forth the opposition of the Conservative Party. It is not pleased with the mission. This is expressed with moderation, though with clearness, in the "Times."

Under the prevailing circumstances, however, the Conservatives will not bring about the fall of the Government, even if they could do this. In their decisive attacks, they will limit themselves to questions of home policy, of which there are far too many. A ministerial crisis, which I do not consider imminent, save in questions of foreign policy, signifies no danger for us.

The question of naval armaments has been brought into the foreground to such an extent, that it is not likely that other questions will be thoroughly gone into at Berlin. I believe, however, that there will be discussions as to Bagdad and I see an indication of this in Cassel's [1] journey to Berlin.

It is extraordinarily difficult to say whether the English Government was right or wrong in taking up this entire matter. *Is there any prospect of success? Almost everybody doubts this. Publicity in such cases is nearly always a disadvantage. One is bound, involuntarily, to think of a peaceful Agadir. One ought, perhaps, to fear that the whole affair will be wrongly interpreted by public opinion, and by the press in Russia and in France. Cambon has communicated his fears to me.* This would, of course, be most untimely.

On the other hand, it might, perhaps, be possible to pacify Germany, and to tear down, *to the extent desired, the Chinese Wall erected between England and Germany—this might also possibly accelerate the peace between Italy and Turkey.*

(716) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan.* 31-*Feb.* 13, 1912. *No.* 35.

I learn through Cambon, that Haldane told his brother, Jules Cambon, that, at the very beginning of the conversation with Emperor William and Bethmann, he had declared that it must be well understood,

[1] Influential banker who acted as negotiator in the Bagdad railroad matter.

that the understanding with France and Russia would remain the basis of English policy.

Hereupon, Jules Cambon had remarked to Haldane:

"It is, consequently, a matter of a *détente*[1] and not of an *Entente.*"

Haldane replied:

"Precisely."

(717) *The Same to Same. Telegram. Jan.* 31-*Feb.* 13, 1912. *No.* 36.

Grey requested me to call and see him today. He told me that Haldane, as had been agreed upon, had not entered into any arrangement at Berlin, and that his conversation with Bethmann had concerned three questions, which might later on form the subject of diplomatic negotiations.

1. *The naval armaments. England insists finally on that relation between the two navies which was recently established by Churchill in a public speech. If, in consequence of mutual declarations, the relations between both countries should, however, have been improved, the proportional growth of both navies might be retarded.*

2. The Bagdad Railway. The discussion referred exclusively to the line south of Bagdad. England is prepared to negotiate, and wishes to discuss a combination, which would ensure her a participation sufficient to secure to her the control over this line and which would recognize her point of view in the matter of Koweit and the Persian Gulf.

It has been expressly stated, that, if an agreement of this nature be achieved between England and Germany, the former is bound in the question of the 4 per cent increase in custom duties, and could give her assent to this increase only with the consent of Russia and France, so that the objection of one of the three Powers might prevent both of the others from concurring in the matter.

3. *The "ententes" with Russia and France. England confirms the statement that neither of them are of an aggressive nature against Germany. If, on the other hand, an aggressive action of Germany's against Russia or France should take place, England reserves to herself her freedom of action.*

Such are the principles upon which, as Haldane has declared, the relations of both countries might undergo improvement.

[1] *Détente*—stoppage, detention, restraint, withholding, hair-trigger.

Haldane is satisfied with the reception accorded him by Bethmann Hollweg. He discussed political questions only with him and with Herr von Stumm. Kiderlen did not participate directly.

(718) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan.* 31-*Feb.* 13, 1912. *No.* 37.

Towards the close of our conversation, Grey remarked to me, that he was anxious that you should know that the initiative for the negotiations had come from Berlin; after it had been accepted on principle, the Berlin Cabinet had expressed the wish that Grey himself should come to Berlin, which, however, he did not consider possible. The choice had thereupon fallen upon Haldane.

(719) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb.* 4-17, 1912. *No.* 44.

Nicolson told me, that Grey, most particularly, appreciated the friendly and conciliatory attitude of the Russian Government during the last negotiations regarding Persia. He gave me a short synopsis of the speech which Grey was to deliver the same evening in Manchester. I made use of this opportunity, to ask Nicolson whether in his opinion the situation created by Haldane's mission would have any influence upon the present relations between Russia and England.

In reply he recalled to me the conversation which I had had with Grey, at which he was present, and the declaration which Asquith had made in Parliament. I remarked to him that I was speaking of public opinion in England. He replied, that in spite of general satisfaction in connection with the decrease of tension in the relations to Germany, the anxiety, regarding Persia, which prevailed here, had, apart from a few irreconcilable circles, already completely quieted down. The Foreign Office had received a letter from the Persian Committee [1] which was couched in quite a different tone from heretofore. This was symptomatic.

Nicolson spoke regretfully of the doubts which had found expression in France. He feared that the same might be the case in Russia. He hopes, however, that this would be of a merely transitory duration, and that it would be rectified by the public declarations. He added that public opinion in England believed in the main, that the journey of

[1] Of the British House of Commons.

Haldane to Berlin signified no modification of the Anglo-Russian entente.[1]

(720) *The Same to the Same. Personal Letter, Feb.* 5-18, 1912.

I sent you, by post, yesterday, the text of a speech which was delivered by Sir Edward Grey at Manchester. He delivered a second speech there yesterday. These two speeches were addressed to an audience which is especially interested in trade in South Persia, and for whom, therefore, Anglo-Russian relations possess great significance. The two speeches are also deserving of a certain attention in that they were couched in a somewhat freer tone than is possible in Parliament. I find both important, inasmuch as they place Lord Haldane's mission at Berlin in the proper perspective. *Though I was not directly alarmed by Haldane's visit to Berlin, I was nevertheless obliged to follow the currents of public opinion in England with increased attention.*

I cannot conceal from you, that the first utterances in the press, and among the public, rather exceeded the limits of what I had expected, although I duly considered that the constant and increasing tension with Germany somewhat depressed the general feeling here. I knew, as I likewise took pains to inform you, that this feeling, proceeding parallel with a decrease of confidence in Russia, might become dangerous to us.

It is true that the reports from Persia have exercised a calming influence. It is also true, that the return of the Court, and all other political or public personages from India, has produced a similar effect, since all of them are convinced of the advantages of the agreement with Russia. *The Order of the Garter, which was conferred upon Sir Edward Grey, was intended to express, in as clear a manner as possible, that the King wished to give his assent to Grey's policy and to his solidarity with the Cabinet.* It is furthermore true, that during the debates upon the speech from the throne, that part of Asquith's speech, which referred to foreign policies, was received with applause by the overwhelming majority of the House, *and what he said, raising his voice, regarding the preservation of the old ententes called forth particularly strong demonstrations of approval.*

[1] Nicolson was anxious to have Benckendorff know that the Haldane mission had no significance.

And, finally, it is also true, that the declarations of Sir Edward Grey, which I have reported to you, leave nothing to be desired in sincerity and decisiveness.

But, in order to be entirely frank, these declarations can be of value to us only when they are confirmed by public opinion. *I could not conceal from myself the fact that Haldane's mission encountered practically no opposition throughout the entire country. The press and the public had, for some time, occupied themselves exclusively with this question, and, in the session of Parliament which I have just mentioned, Germany was discussed to a greater extent than Russia and France. All this caused a certain apprehension.*

In this connection, the two speeches made by Sir Edward Grey are of great import. They were very simple, very clear and very decisive and were received with general applause. *The simple significance of these speeches is as follows: Maintenance of the ententes and the armaments of England, a relieving of the tension with Germany—in so far as this may be reconciled with the two first conditions.*

Such is the meaning, and such, too, is the general impression. Even in those newspapers and reviews which have most zealously entered the lists for a fundamental change in German-English relations, the question of the *ententes* is once more occupying the space it deserves, as, for example, in the "Westminster Gazette," the "Daily Telegraph," the "Spectator" and others, also the Sunday papers of today. The same thing is also repeated to me orally from all sides. Sir Arthur Nicolson told me absolutely the same thing day before yesterday, and that with so much emphasis, that I felt I must send you a telegraphic report of his utterance.

I concede that the rapidity of this veering round—rather this reversion to England's old policy, as expressed during recent years—has in some degree astonished me. And yet, I do not believe that I err, in declaring, that this change will be a permanent one, because in reality it is natural and logical. Reassured as to the entente with Russia, the English public is returning to it, as also to the entente with France. The basis has been re-established once more. . . . .

There remains only to explain the almost universal approval of Haldane's mission. This is not particularly difficult: Haldane's visit to Berlin was in accordance with the actual situation. Public

opinion in England allowed itself to be influenced by two considerations: *Clouds, at least in the imagination, hung over Russia and France, and one also had the firm conviction that the bitterness prevailing in Germany was based upon a false conception of English policy,*[1] *something which might produce not only dangerous but imaginary and unnecessary consequences.*

This explains the moderate tone of the English press towards Germany. *But it was as impossible to go a step farther, and to be the first to stretch out one's hand, as it was impossible to reject a German initiative.* It was under these conditions that Lord Haldane went to Berlin and there could have been no better basis. The publicity given to this event was, however, so great that public opinion for ten days occupied itself exclusively with this visit and lost the clearness of its vision. . . .

Permit me now to revert to the opinion I have once before expressed—that the failure of Haldane's mission will create a worse situation than that which existed before. I have no ground for assuming that the mission has led to no result whatsoever. If the German Government had the intention of disrupting England's "ententes," with a general Anglo-German understanding as a consequence—then, to be sure, the failure has been complete. To this extent, I share the opinion of my French Colleague, for Cambon seems to believe that Haldane's mission will lead to no result whatsoever. This last point of view I consider as exaggerated. . . . . . .

Has Lord Haldane succeeded in convincing Berlin that according to English opinion, neither the Triple Entente, nor any other English Entente, has an aggressive character directed against Germany? Has he succeeded in convincing the Germans that if England prepared herself for war during the preceding summer, this did not happen with any aggressive intention, but merely to defend her own interests and those of France in the event of a German attack? I do not know and cannot permit myself to indulge in any judgment from here. Taking all in all, however, I incline to the view that the efforts of the English statesman have not been entirely without result.

There is in addition another circumstance to consider. England has shown her readiness—it is true maintaining all her con-

[1] The view of Benckendorff as *diplomatist.*

ditions and her old point of view—of again taking up the negotiations with regard to the Bagdad Railway. . . . . .

(721) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, Feb.* 16-29, 1912.

Though Lord Haldane's journey to Berlin took place rather suddenly, it was not unexpected by the French Government, as Poincaré [1] informs me. It has been known for some time in Paris, that some means for diminishing the dangerous tension in both countries was being sought for in England, as well as in Germany. *If in spite of this, a certain nervousness made itself felt here at first, it has been completely allayed by the public declaration of the British Government—namely, that Haldane's journey could in no way weaken the close relations of England to France and Russia, and that the Paris Cabinet, as well as that of St. Petersburg, would be precisely informed as to the results achieved.*

Since then, as I am aware, Poincaré has received several communications regarding the contents of the conversations between Haldane and the German Ministers. *This information coincides exactly with that which Count Benckendorff has communicated to you by telegraph.* The naval armaments, the Bagdad Railway, certain colonial questions and finally the general character of England's relations to Germany, Russia and France were discussed. *In none of these questions is there a prospect of a concrete agreement, much less has an agreement been concluded; the most difficult question, the naval armaments, has apparently not advanced one step further.* Nevertheless, both parties have received a favourable impression from the conversations, and consider it necessary and desirable to continue the exchange of opinions.

Poincaré remarked to me that the French Government could only welcome the attempts of England and Germany to establish more normal relations, and that these attempts have neither alarmed France nor evoked any doubt as to the sincerity of the British Government. It was rather to be feared, that these negotiations would lead to a failure, and that, as a result Anglo-German relations might become still worse which would signify a new menace to European peace.[2] *Poincaré's declara-*

[1] French minister of foreign affairs.

[2] Poincaré's mind must have conceived Great Britain's international conduct as the keystone in the arch of European peace—if correctly reported here.

tions seem to me to be honestly meant, and I, for my part, am making efforts to strengthen him in his optimistic view of things. I, nevertheless, cannot refrain from observing, that a different opinion prevails in military circles here; military men fear, that if an agreement be reached between England and Germany, regarding the cessation, or, at least, a diminishing of the rivalry in naval armaments, the German Government would then be able to dispose of redoubled means for increasing its army—which would necessarily call forth countermeasures on the part of France and Russia.[1]

As to the French press, its utterances, now as before, are kept in a moderate and quiet tone, whilst the Exchange has reacted to the negotiations with an upward tendency.

(722) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, March 2-15, 1912. No. 67.*

No. 1. Grey requested me to call upon him, and told me, that the German Ambassador had declared to him, yesterday, that the eventual naval program would necessarily depend upon the policy which England adopts towards Germany, and that *public opinion in Germany was still of the view that this policy had in mind an attack upon Germany. Grey replied, that, if the German Government was in need of a confirmation of England's peaceable intentions, in order to pacify public opinion, he was prepared to give this, but with the provision that the German Government would secure itself no supplementary credits for subsequent armaments, and that, in the last-named case, the British Government would be forced to revert to the program laid down in Churchill's speech.*[2] **Thereupon, Grey handed me a memorandum, which he had given to Metternich, remarking that the memorandum was couched in a form which would render it possible for him to make use of it in a public speech, if no further increase in the**

[1] So that an agreement between Great Britain and Germany on armaments on sea would have merely aggravated friction on land; a case of something being six of one and half-a-dozen of the other. As seen in the light of this statement, the Great War was no longer a mere possibility but an actual fact, though at the time that was not apparent. Within the next twelve months, Russia set a new pace in the reorganization and increase of her army, France augmented her military forces by returning to the three-years term of service for her conscripts, and Germany raised a billion marks for her own military establishment.

[2] Grey's admission, in this case at least, that Great Britain was setting the pace in naval armament.

German navy should take place. *After I had read the memorandum, I told Grey that it was a repetition of Haldane's declarations in Berlin. Grey agreed that this was so, and added, that Haldane had represented England's freedom of action as something self-evident, if Germany pursued an aggressive policy towards those powers with which England had concluded* ententes. *These naturally remained in full force. Grey made the same communication to Cambon. He requested us both to emphasize in our reports, that this communication was strictly confidential.*

(723) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, March* 2-15, 1912. *No.* 68.

No. 2. Text of memorandum mentioned in my telegram No. 1. *"England will make no unprovoked attack upon Germany and pursue no aggressive policy towards the latter. An attack upon Germany is not the purpose, nor a part of any pact, agreement, or understanding in which England now participates, nor would she participate in any project of this sort.*[1]

(724) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Sazonoff. Letter, March* 16-29, 1912.

The speech which Churchill delivered on March 5-18, *à propos* of the dissensions regarding the Naval Budget, has aroused great excitement in Germany. *It has caused a particularly unpleasant impression in those political circles which had attached an exaggerated significance to the visit of Lord Haldane and hoped for an earnest rapprochement with England. The aforementioned speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the proposals for new laws, relative to an increase in the land and naval forces of Germany, which have just been accepted by the Federal Council, are the best proof, that there can be no idea, at the present moment, of a limitation of armaments either on the part of England or Germany.*

Not only the Pan-German circles, which, as usual, give loud utterance to their anger *à propos* of this challenging of Germany, but also liberal papers, and even the semi-official "Kölnische Zeitung," *have in terms of moderation expressed their astonishment at the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty, who openly concedes, that the*

[1] How sincere this formal declaration was is shown elsewhere in the documents.

navy is not meant at all for the defence of the country, but is intended to wage battle with the navy of a power with whom England maintains absolutely friendly relations.

The contents of the First Lord's speech were made known in Berlin, simultaneously with the news, that the departure of Emperor William for Corfu had been postponed for an indefinite time. In addition there were rumours, regarding the resignation of the Imperial Chancellor and Kiderlen-Wächter, as well as an alleged change for the worse in the relations of Russia and Turkey. All this caused such excitement among the public, and on the Exchange that the Government found it necessary to issue reassuring declarations,—that the journey of Emperor William had been postponed only for a few days, and merely because it was essential to take the necessary steps relating to the strike of the miners. And the Kaiser did, actually, leave for Vienna two days later, and the excitement calmed down to some degree, although the rumour persists that after the return of the Kaiser, important changes in the higher governmental circles will be impending and those who are well-informed are of the opinion, that the positions of the Imperial Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs are seriously undermined.

(725) *The Russian Ambassador at London to M. Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, April 25-May 8, 1912.*

I regret that I am not as yet able to give you definite advices regarding the appointment of Baron Marschall to the post of German Ambassador in London. I know that Count Metternich spoke yesterday to Sir Edward Grey, and was received in audience by the King on the same day. I do not as yet know the subject of the audience, but I believe that a decision has already been reached.

I would not have reported to you on this, had I not been able to tell you that this change of Ambassadors is agreeable neither to the Government nor to the King. I have information from a reliable source to the effect that the King even intends to express the wish that Count Metternich might remain in London. A step of this kind must naturally be regarded as a pure formality,—it has nevertheless a symptomatic meaning. Sir Arthur Nicolson, on his part informs me, that he has as yet no official confirmation; and adds,

that Sir Edward Grey highly esteems the upright and sincere attitude of Count Metternich and would see him leave London with great regret. Sir Arthur added further:

"If the German Government imagines, that it is making a great coup *by sending Baron Marschall hither, it is in error, and should the future Ambassador assume the task of separating England from her friends, he will find himself barking up the wrong tree."*

I beg Your Excellency to regard this communication as wholly confidential.

(726) *The Same to the Same. Letter, May* 5-18, 1912.

I cannot recall that any change in diplomatic personalities has ever so persistently occupied the press as the appointment of Baron Marschall, in place of Count Metternich as Germany's Ambassador in London.

Our Ambassador at Berlin will be better able to report to you concerning the motives of this appointment than I. In this respect, I know only what Count Metternich himself told me, in a private and confidential way, and I, therefore, beg you to regard my communication in this light.

I hasten to add, that I have absolute faith in the words of my German colleague. For over a year, he has been thinking of withdrawing from diplomatic activity. He has expressed this desire for some time. Having been retained here until now, his request for permission to resign was granted upon the occasion of his last sojourn in Berlin. The matter was to have been kept secret, until the appointment of Baron Marschall had become officially known. However, a few days after the decision in question had been reached, the official press of Germany began to occupy itself with the matter, and from this moment on began a press campaign which was extremely painful for Count Metternich. *The same thing happened with this campaign as in all similar contingencies. It did more harm than good, and Baron Marschall will have great difficulty in proving here, that he is not coming to London in order to bring about, in the face of all opposition, an Anglo-German entente—merely through his appearance.*[1]

This press campaign has been supported in London by the radical

[1] A characteristic failing of the German press.

press and by those papers which are under Jewish influence. Both tendencies pursue the same object: a rupture of the Anglo-Russian entente and even of the English entente with France.

I know that one of the reasons for the resignation of Count Metternich was this constant and regrettable influencing of the English press.

As always in such instances, the national feeling of the English has been injured merely because one has seen in this an attempt to foist upon England a change of diplomatic personnel and a whole program, even before the English Government itself had been asked. Baron Marschall will not be received without a certain amount of distrust.

The King, as I know, has privately expressed his greatest regret to Count Metternich regarding his resignation. Sir Edward Grey spoke to me in terms of the greatest sympathy, regarding Metternich's personal character, and his sincere and open attitude; the resignation of the German Ambassador caused a public demonstration in the House of Commons—a very unusual event in view of English customs.

I cannot, however, conceal the fact that this press campaign, however artificially it may have been evoked, nevertheless proves that sympathies for Germany have made serious progress in England. And Count Metternich was quite right in remarking to me some days ago:

"I am leaving to my successor a situation more favourable than it has been for long time."[1] . . . . . .

(727) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Sazonoff. Report, May 11-24, 1912. No. 27.*

The noise which was produced in the German press by the transference of Baron Marschall from Constantinople to London, in nowise accords with the significance of this event, and is merely a proof, how greatly public opinion in Germany is interested in

[1] The last six paragraphs contain statements hard to reconcile with one another, except we assume that Metternich was a mere dummy, whose words did not go very far in the Berlin Foreign Office. The fact is that Count Metternich was too much the Kaiser's man and had the habit of looking upon the orders of the Wilhelmstrasse as undue interference. Thus it came about that the press campaign and the ambassador's views had little in common.

everything, which has even the slightest connection with the relations of Germany to England. There is no doubt, that the German Government has weighty reasons for recalling at the present difficult moment Marschall from Constantinople, where he played so great a rôle, and where he had created for himself a position quite out of the common. It is exceedingly probable, that the governing circles of Germany were herein actuated by the desire to achieve, if not an agreement, then at least, a certain *rapprochement* with England by entrusting these negotiations to a diplomat who had proved so efficient at another post; but it is unquestionably true that everything which has been published in newspapers of every kind of political tendency and colour, regarding this matter, and that the hopes which were founded upon the alleged new mission of the German Ambassador in London, have lacked a solid basis, and that *they merely prove with what concern the strained relations with England are regarded in Germany.*

These relations, which in our day constitute one of the main, if not the *main, features of "Weltpolitik," arise from the unusual economic strength of Germany, and the corresponding development of her land, and, above all, her naval forces. In the latter, England sees a threat not only to her own naval supremacy, but at the same time to her existence as a world Power. The situation did not originate at one blow, and cannot be changed in a day, however much this may be desired by the one, and by both, and however capable the statesmen may be who assume the task of bringing about an Anglo-German agreement. A task of this sort is not easy, for in order to achieve a result of this kind, England would be, for once and for all time, obliged to renounce the idea of opposing the commercial expansion of Germany in all parts of the world, and the incidental increase of her merchant fleet and her navy.*

Baron Marschall is too clever not to take into full account the difficulty of the problem which confronts him, and if, in spite of his advanced age, he has been pleased to accept the post of German representative in London, which has been offered to him, then one must believe, that the program, which he has in mind, is much more modest than that which has been ascribed to him in so persistent a manner by the German Press, from the very moment when this appointment became known.

VIII

FRANCO-RUSSIAN EFFORTS TO PERFECT TRIPLE ENTENTE

(May-August 1912)

(728) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, May* 18-31, 1912.

I have sent you lately various newspaper articles, dealing with a question which is very important in itself, but which, as far as I know, has so far been discussed only by the Press—i.e., *the question of an alliance between England and France.*

I think, that this press campaign has been the indirect result of various articles published in "The Times" and written by its military correspondent, Colonel Repington, who is himself one of the most convinced adherents of the *Entente* of England with France and Russia. *These articles referred to England's military position in the Mediterranean, which has been rather weakened since the withdrawal of the British squadron,*[1] *and which is not, in the belief of a considerable part of the British public, sufficiently secured by substituting a French squadron, as long as the relation of the two countries are based upon an* entente *and not upon an alliance. The journey of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Churchill to Malta, their meeting with Lord Kitchener, and an intended visit to Bizerta, have still further enlivened these discussions.*

Whilst the journey aforesaid is of an entirely private nature, yet I firmly believe, that the attention of these two Ministers has been directed to the situation which has arisen for England. Moreover, certain misgivings have lately been expressed by public opinion in England with regard to the ultimate intentions of Italy who has

[1] Incident to the growth of the German navy, which necessitated a strengthening of the British Home fleet.

occupied various islands, among them Rhodes.[1] I may mention, in passing, that this question of the Greek islands which belong to Turkey, and which have been occupied by Italy, is engaging the attention of the British Government.

Nicolson spoke to me on this matter only very briefly and privately; he is thinking, it would appear, of the restitution of these islands to Turkey after the conclusion of peace.[2] He foresees difficulties. Cambon, in a private conversation, went even farther; according to his opinion one will have to reckon with complications; a simple restitution, as demanded by logic, would immediately cause unrest and a certain agitation in Greece, for Turkey has always lost territory inhabited by Christians as soon as it was occupied by a Christian Power—an argument to which Greece will perhaps have recourse, and which may find a certain echo in Hellenophile circles which, as is wellknown, have their representatives in all countries.

Cambon is of the opinion that a simple restitution would not be without its dangers. Some of these islands formerly enjoyed more or less established privileges, which the young Turkish Party is now endeavouring, as far as possible, to restrict. These islands, at least to some degree, welcomed the Italian garrisons as their liberators; the unconditional restoration of Turkish authority might, therefore, give rise to disturbances, above all to acts of revenge on the part of the Turks, from which serious international difficulties might result.

I beg Your Excellency to excuse this rather long digression, but it is directly connected with the contents of this letter.

I called upon Sir Arthur Nicolson yesterday, and touched upon the newspaper articles dealing with an Anglo-French alliance. I told him frankly, that I must mention the matter in my correspondence with you and that I should be much obliged to him for elucidation.

Sir Arthur replied that no exchange of views had taken place between the two Governments,[3] that neither of them had taken the initiative in that respect, and that he did not believe that that would be the case for the present, since such a step would, to say

[1] Result of Turco-Italian war in Tripoli.

[2] Though Great Britain used many a "Christian" argument why the Turk should be driven from Europe.

[3] Rather a delicate way of circumventing the fact that Great Britain had a Naval Convention with France.

the least, be inopportune, because the present moment was not a calm one and, in consequence of the war,[1] there was actually a crisis prevailing, so that such a step would, probably, be looked upon by Germany as a regrettable provocation.

Sir Arthur told me this as a personal opinion of his own. He had all the more reason to lay weight upon this circumstance, for I do not think that I am mistaken in asserting, that he has very decided opinions on the question of an Anglo-French alliance. *Too experienced to act otherwise than with the greatest caution, he appears to me to be at the bottom of his heart not only an adherent of an Anglo-French alliance, but of a new Triple Alliance, whose task it would be to form a counter-balance against the existing Triple-Alliance, since such a combination would be a surer safeguard of peace than any other.*

I should be much obliged, if Your Excellency would regard this conjecture as to Sir Arthur's opinions, as strictly confidential, for his words do not permit of my making any positive statement. Besides, great as his influence is, it does not extend so far as that.

(729) *The Same to the Same. Letter, May* 20-*June* 2, 1912.

I believe that I ought to direct Your Excellency's special attention to the enclosed leading article which appeared to-day in the "Observer," likewise to a rather important correspondence from St. Petersburg in the same paper.

Both these articles deserve special attention, because the point of view of public opinion, and the mood in which these questions are being discussed, are therein more faithfully reproduced than in anything else I have read up to the present. *I should not like to assert, that the majority of the nation has already been won for an alliance with France. Things do not move so fast in England, but, roused by a certain part of the British public, which, from various undefined, and not always patriotic reasons, begins to incline toward Germany, this majority is beginning to feel a certain anxiety and believes that a policy based exclusively on* ententes *is not wholly satisfactory.*

The "Observer" belongs to a group of papers which have lately been amalgamated under the direction of a highly gifted publicist,

[1] Turco-Italian war in Tripoli.

Mr. Garvin. I know him personally and *I believe that he sometimes receives directions from the British Foreign Office. It is self-evident, that he gives a greater relief* [1] *to these suggestions than is actually expressed by the real feelings of the heads of British policy.*

There is no doubt, that the appointment of Baron Marschall, as German Ambassador in London, has stimulated this agitation. The exaggerated press utterances, which accompanied this appointment have already lead to the results foreseen—a fairly strong reaction has set in and finds expression, in the first place, in the numerous tokens of sympathy received by the retiring Ambassador, Count Metternich, from the public, and even from the Government.

(730) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, May 24-June 6,* 1912.

The question raised by the English Press, concerning the transformation of the Anglo-French *entente* into a formal alliance, has, naturally, evoked the liveliest interest in Government circles, as well as in the Press. Poincaré, in an interview with me, in a very decisive manner expressed his view on this question:

According to his conviction, there was no need for France or England to desire any alteration in the present relations. Recent events had proved that, according to the present European situation, the community of interests of France and England, and the understanding based thereon, was so great and indisputable, that, in case of any serious complications, the common policy of both nations would thereby be fully safeguarded. The signing of any formal document—even supposing that that would be compatible with the French or British Constitution—would in no way strengthen this guarantee. For even if such an agreement existed, Mr. Asquith's recent public utterance remains in full force, that, at the critical moment, the British Government could only act upon that decision which the British nation would prescribe to the Government. *As to the question touched upon by the Press, concerning an eventual change in the military organisation of England, and the introduction of universal military service, Poincaré is of opinion that it would be very frivolous on the part of*

[1] The word "relief" is evidently used in the plastic sense—making clearer or more prominent.

France to moot this question even in the most careful manner, for this is a purely national English affair. As far as the French Press is concerned, the principal papers had shown great tact in this matter, and, in the majority of cases, adopted the view, that the question of an alliance and a military reorganisation of England was a question to be decided by the English themselves, and that the French newspapers must refrain from exerting any pressure in one direction or the other.[1]

(731) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin to Sazonoff. Letter, May 25-June 7, 1912.*

The question of transforming the friendly agreement between England and France into an alliance, arouses great interest in Germany, and great anxiety in political circles here. *Although the press loudly asserts that this question has no significance for Germany, since events during late years have proved that in case of a conflict between Germany and France, England would place herself at the side of the latter anyway, no matter whether she was bound to France by an alliance or by an agreement, the contrary is, nevertheless, established by the passion with which this question is discussed and by the space which it occupies in all newspapers. Not the fact of the conclusion of an alliance between England and France makes itself felt, but rather the circumstance that the Germans have been finally convinced, that England is now turning away from the possibility of a rapprochement with Germany—a rapprochement, which Germany in truth passionately desired. It has now become common knowledge that the last Morocco Agreement between Germany and France has not only not led to a rapprochement between the two countries, but has, on the contrary, called forth such a political atmosphere, such an excitement, as may at any moment lead to the most regrettable consequences for the preservation of European peace.*

The question of Alsace-Lorraine, in which a certain calm seems to have made itself felt during recent years, has once more been acutely intensified and, pursuant to instructions from Berlin, the local authorities there have taken a number of measures which are extremely inconvenient to the population and which call forth great excitement in France.

[1] A sane view, indeed.

The attitude of chauvinistic papers as, for instance, *"La France Militaire,"* which reproached Germany with every possible baseness, has produced a warning, in the semi-official *"Kölnische Zeitung,"* to the effect, that, if France wishes to cross swords with Germany, the latter was ready, which was best proved by the quick acceptance by the representatives of the people of the bill for increasing the fighting forces of the Empire.

Relations of such a nature, to a neighbouring state, naturally, cause Germany to follow with the greatest attention every step of the Power which feels hostile to her, that is to say England.[1] *Thus, for example, the consultations of Churchill and Asquith with Lord Kitchener at Malta are interpreted in the sense, that these are a preparatory step to the conclusion of an alliance with France, in which the latter would be called upon to defend the mutual interests of both in the Mediterranean.*[2]

(732) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, May 22-June 4, 1912. No. 1062.*

Personal. In view of the impending meeting, about the end of July, between our Monarch and Emperor William in Finnish Waters, *it would be well if you would betimes inform Sir Edward Grey, and explain to him, that this event need cause no anxiety in England, since we are firmly determined to maintain our cordial relations with the London Cabinet as established during the last few years.* If local considerations, in your opinion render it necessary to prepare public opinion and the Press, I beg you to take the necessary measures. Copy sent to Paris.

(733) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May 22-June 4, 1912. No. 1061.*

I am telegraphing to Paris:

"You may inform Poincaré, confidentially, of the proposed meeting between our Monarch and Emperor William in Finnish Waters. Add that the ties, which bind us to France, are too strong to make it neces-

[1] While it is possible that the views of Schebeko were influenced by his Berlin environments, it is, nevertheless, noteworthy that he deems it proper to make such a statement to his chief, which, in the case of a chargé d'affaires, must be considered as rather daring.

[2] For that purpose Great Britain had already a naval convention with France.

sary to point out, that neither the French Government nor French public opinion need feel the slightest alarm concerning this event. As for preparing public opinion in France, I request you to entrust this task to the French Government, in order that it might explain to the press, in the most suitable way, and in accordance with local requirements, that the meeting in question cannot injure our relations with France."

(734) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 24-*July* 7, 1912. *No.* 1260.

I am telegraphing to Paris:

"The meeting of the two Emperors in Baltischport took a very satisfactory course. *While there was great cordiality on both sides, public statements, as to political questions, have plainly proved that there is no intention of attempting any change in the grouping of the European Powers.* Germany, likewise made no proposals in the question of putting an end to the Italian-Turkish War. This, together with the authentic press accounts of the proceedings, furnishes the best proof, how right we were, when we informed France that the fears she has entertained were without foundation. I request you to speak in this sense to Poincaré."

(735) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, June* 25-*July* 8, 1912.

The meeting of the two Monarchs at Baltischport was in every respect satisfactory. In my conversations with Emperor William, and with the Chancellor, the most important political questions were naturally mentioned, and I received a favourable impression of the attitude and intention of the higher Government circles in Germany. *The Emperor, as well as the Chancellor, gave expression to the wish that the traditional relations between both countries might be strengthened, since this would serve not only the welfare of both countries but also the maintenance of peace in Europe.* In this connection, Bethmann-Hollweg declared, explicitly, that, recognising how useful the existing international groupings of the Powers have been for the preservation of peace, he was nowise desirous of causing a change in this respect, nor of detaching any power from the group it had joined through historical necessity. *He told me, that*

Germany only cherishes a desire, that the relations of the powers to one another should not prevent them from also maintaining good relations with the powers of the other group. Although he thus admits, that the existing groups, which have justified themselves in practice, satisfy the demands of our time, and therefore call for no change, Bethmann-Hollweg regards it as desirable to avoid anything which, while accentuating the outward division of the two groups of European Powers, might preclude the possibility of new constellations in the future, in case future events should make the latter necessary. *Emperor William, and the Chancellor, repeatedly pointed out that Germany needs peace, in order to consolidate the preeminently important results of German industry and prosperity during the last decade.* I told the Chancellor, that I had no doubt regarding the pacific intentions of the German Government, but that I should like to know whether Germany was ready to make her influence felt in this sense in those quarters where Germany might be drawn into European entanglements against her will.[1] *I asked him in particular, whether the Berlin Cabinet would, if necessary, use its influence at Vienna, in order to prevent Austria from penetrating further in the Balkans. Bethmann-Hollweg promised this without hesitation, and pointed out, that he could unconditionally renew the assurances he had already given me at Potsdam.* He, on his part, gave expression to the hope, that we, too, would, as heretofore, moderate the ambitions of the little Balkan States, and in particular give counsels of prudence at Sofia.

In regard to the Italian-Turkish War, no proposals were made by Germany as to how to end this war, contrary to the fears entertained at Paris and London before the meeting. Contenting himself with a reference to the damage done to German trade by the long war, the Chancellor expressed his satisfaction, that we, together with the other European Powers, had attempted to reconcile the two belligerents, and he assured me, that every further step in this direction on our part could be sure of Germany's entire approval. *I must add, however, that although the German Government declared itself ready to take part in any common step toward ending the war, I, nevertheless, received the impression, that Berlin would prefer if peace*

[1] Austria-Hungary. Sazonoff was perfecting the Balkan League on the basis of Pan-Slavism.

could be brought about by direct negotiations between the belligerents without outside interference.[1] . . . .

After speaking in high terms of Lord Haldane, the Chancellor pointed out, that relations between the two countries at present were less strained, but he admitted, that much would still have to be done in this respect in order to reach a tangible result. In regard to the Chinese loan a certain difference of opinion had become apparent between Germany and us. This difference is a natural result of our different points of view. *In China, Germany sees above all a great market for her own goods, and is, naturally, interested in maintaining the purchasing power of this market, for which reason she must fear the possibility of a disruption of the Chinese Empire.* Therefore, Berlin desires the conclusion of a big Chinese loan, which would enable that country to get out of its present difficult situation. *Russia, on the other hand, as a neighbour of China, with a long and insufficiently-guarded frontier, cannot desire the strengthening of this neighbour.* Therefore, the failure of the proposed loan would not annoy us, even the aforementioned collapse of the present Chinese Empire would leave us indifferent. I have made this perfectly plain to Emperor William and to the Chancellor.

As for the Dardanelles, the Bagdad Railway and Persia, those problems were not discussed. No understanding was reached on any of these questions nor was any such understanding proposed.

Consequently, the meeting at Baltischport has, of course, improved our relations with Berlin, but at the same time effected no change in our relations to the other Powers. There is therefore not the slightest cause for jealous anxiety at Paris or in London.

(736) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Neratoff. Telegram, June 28-July 11, 1912. No. 187.*

I think I ought to direct your attention to the following passage in the speech of Mr. Bonar Law in the House of Commons, as being important for the future:—

"The Right Hon. gentleman (Sir Edward Grey) said this evening, that a good understanding with France and Russia should form the

[1] A wise policy too often ignored to the detriment of mankind. Regardless of what German international policy was otherwise, her statesmen stood traditionally for non-interference.

starting point of our policy. I prefer to declare, that it is the basis of our foreign policy. He read an official statement, which, in my opinion, bears evidence of great statesmanlike wisdom. I shall read it to you again": . . . . At the close, Bonar Law declares: "Such is the policy of this country and if the party, in whose name I speak, comes into power, this will also be the policy of that party." [1]

Nothing more positive has been uttered since the formation of the Entente.

(737) *The Same to the Same. Letter, July* 3-16, 1912.

I have not much to add to my report of the Parliamentary proceedings, which I sent you by post. The proceedings were a great success for the Cabinet, as well as for Sir Edward Grey personally.

As Your Excellency is aware, a certain opposition from various directions made itself felt for a time. *Without going so far as to condemn the whole present direction of policy of the British Government, there were, nevertheless, in the various Parliamentary parties, men who reproached the Foreign Secretary with the fact, that by his all too unyielding attitude, he had rendered it impossible to improve the strained relations with Germany, and that, in consequence of this, such a policy meant a menace to peace.*[2] *On the day of the debate, no such utterance was heard, for the speeches of Mr. Ponsonby and of an Irish M. P. are of no importance.*

In his very moderate speech, which was even conciliatory towards Germany, Sir Edward Grey decisively maintained the basis of this policy. He won,—something that occurs but scarcely—not only the attention, but the approval of the whole House, and Mr. Bonar Law, the Leader of the opposition, even amplified the arguments and conclusions of the Minister.

I think I ought to remark that this session coincided in point of time with the meeting of the Emperors at Baltischport,[3] the results of which were already known through newspaper reports. *The way in which these reports were dealt with by the various speakers is the best evidence that the meeting of the two Monarchs had not given*

[1] Of course, it was rather hard after this for the Germans to assume that from the British could be expected acts at all favorable to Germany.
[2] As it did, ultimately.
[3] William of Germany and Nicholas of Russia.

rise to any serious anxiety, let alone distrust on the part of the Government or public opinion.

I believe, I am not mistaken in assuming, that the recent news to the effect that Russia would possess, within a few years, a mighty navy, has largely contributed to the English verdict as to the value of a rapprochement between England and Russia.

(738) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, July* 4-17, 1912. *No.* 191.

Grey spoke to me of the telegram, in which O'Beirne [1] reported on his interview with our Minister after the latter's return from Baltischport. He expressed to me his great gratitude, and declared that he very highly appreciated the frank statements of M. Sazonoff. Sir Edward said, that he entirely shared, above all, the point of view, that it was necessary to have confidence in one another and that no entente was possible without such confidence; that his confidence in our entente was perfect, and that he had no doubt that the same might be said of Paris.

Grey told me that Baron Marschall [2] had hitherto, in conversasations with him, dealt only with the general situation, and had not broached any special question, with the exception of certain matters touching South-Africa. *He believes that Marschall would, for the present, merely observe things and would try to find his way in his new surroundings,—an attitude which Sir Edward thought quite proper.*

(739) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Neratoff. Letter, July* 5-18, 1912.

After I had already begun my cure at Contrexeville, I interrupted it for two days, in order to have a talk with Poincaré, and to report my impression to you through the courier who is leaving to-day. Unfortunately, a cousin of Poincaré's died yesterday, and I could not see the Minister. But I had a long conversation with Paléologue, who is well informed of all details of pending political questions. He told me the following:

The French Government is quite satisfied with the results attained at Baltischport. The communication to the Press, as well as those from our Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Prime Minister,

[1] British chargé d'affaires at St. Petersburg.
[2] German ambassador at London.

to the French Ambassador, in particular, have convinced the French Minister that the above-mentioned meeting has reinforced the guarantees of European peace, whilst in nowise disturbing the relations of the Powers to one another. On my part, I found an opportunity to communicate to Paléologue some details from the letter of M. Sazonoff of June 25, choosing those which were specially calculated to confirm the optimism of the French Government, concerning that meeting.

In general, I received the impression that, thanks to the timely explanations given to the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, and through me to Poincaré, the first nervousness and suspicions of the French Ministers were allayed, and that we need not fear a repetition of the misunderstandings which made themselves felt after the Potsdam meeting. This time, we also succeeded in keeping the French public from getting a false impression of what happened. *This result was attained by my energetic personal influencing of the principle French newspapers,*[1] *while similar and, naturally, even more effectual steps, were undertaken by Poincaré. Our efforts in this direction attained success all the more easily, since the first communiqué published in the newspapers was very cleverly worded, and furnished the Paris newspapers with the necessary material for their articles.* Very important, too, was the presence, at Paris, of the chiefs of our General Staff, and of our Admiralty Staff, at the very time the Emperors met, which circumstance furnished a plain proof of the durability of the Russian-French Alliance.

(740) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Neratoff. Report, July 20-Aug. 2, 1912. No. 136.*

With regard to the revelations of the "Temps" concerning the Naval Convention.

M. Paléologue informed me, that, while the affair was very unpleasant to the Prime Minister, there was no reason to be alarmed about its consequences. *He believed that here, as well as abroad, people would rather be astonished that such a Convention had not been concluded at an earlier date. The Prime Minister assumes, that the*

[1] It would seem that the activity at London of the Germans in press matters, of which Count Benckendorff complains, did not serve as a horrible example to Iswolsky—nor to Benckendorff himself, as is made clear in these documents.

paper obtained its information from the Government departments at various dates. The curiosity of journalists had long ago been roused by the rumour that an agreement, concerning the Mediterranean, was signed, and this had led them incidentally on the track of the Russo-French Naval Convention.

(741) *The Same to the Same. Report, July 24-Aug. 6, 1912. No. 141.*

M. Paléologue thinks the article in the "Echo de Paris" in the highest degree deplorable, and has published, through Havas, a communication in form of a telegram from London.[1] On my remarking that a refutation would surely carry more weight, if published in form of the usual semi-official communication, he declared that that would have led to attacks by the whole Press on the *"Echo de Paris,"* which, in its turn, would have replied and opened an undesirable press controversy. *He added, that, at his instance, the "Temps" and the "Journal des Débats" would publish commentaries which would strengthen the impression of the refutation.*

(742) *Neratoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, July 28-Aug. 10, 1912. No. 1520.*

I am telegraphing to Berlin. Your telegram Nr. 80 received.

"To an inquiry, on the part of the German Ambassador, I replied, that our so-called Naval Convention with France was confined to the quite natural resolve of Allies to bring the chiefs of the Naval Staffs into direct contact, similar to that, which had existed for a long time between the two General Staffs.

"Do not take the initiative in this matter, but if questions are addressed to you in the Foreign Office, you may reply in the above sense."

(743) *Memorandum by Sazonoff. (August, 1912.)*

On the occasion of the visit of M. Poincaré, the French Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, to St. Petersburg, I had several conversations with him.

In the course of one of our first conversations, we expressed our mutual gratification as to the fact that the negotiations carried

[1] Indicating how reliable "Havas" reports may be.

on between our Admiralty Staffs have led to a favourable result. *The plan of a Naval Convention, signed in Paris by Admiral Aubert and Prince Lieven, has been approved by our Emperor, and I received full authority to sign this Convention. The Military Convention concluded about twenty years ago, between Russia and France, having been re-affirmed by both Governments through an exchange of notes, we decided with M. Poincaré to apply the same procedure to the Naval Convention. On August 2 and 3, we exchanged letters with M. Poincaré in which the coming into force of the Naval Convention is confirmed.*

In touching upon the relations between France and Italy, I expressed to Poincaré my sincere gratification at the evident improvement of these relations, which for a time, appeared to be so strained. *The improvement was all the more important in view of the impending renewal of the Triple Alliance. I directed his attention to the fact, that it was particularly important for France, to keep Italy within the limits of her normal obligations towards her Allies, without giving her cause to attach herself to them more closely, which would be very disadvantageous in case of war between Germany and France.*

Under the provision, that friendly relations and mutual confidence prevail between Italy, and the three Entente Powers, *Italy's remaining as a dead weight in the Triple Alliance is of advantage, not only to France and Russia, but to Italy herself, since this is equivalent to a guarantee against an Austro-Italian war, in which, by one means or another, the other Powers might likewise become involved.*

Poincaré told me that he fully shared this view, and that he did all that was possible to achieve this object. He hopes that his efforts will not be in vain, and that he will succeed in establishing the neighbourly relations of France and Italy upon a solid basis. In this respect good results had already been achieved.

Poincaré regretted, that, in the matter of the Italo-Turkish War, he had been unable to back up, in the degree desired, our attempts at a reconciliation of the belligerents. *A certain measure of reserve on the part of France was to be explained by the fact, that regard must be had for the feelings of the Mohammedan population of her overseas possessions, where any pressure on Turkey would cause excitement, which might, especially at the present juncture, prove dangerous in view of the great difficulties attendant upon the establishment*

of the French Protectorate over Morocco[1]*;* furthermore, the Paris Cabinet was induced to take up an attitude of reserve in view of the consideration, that neither Germany nor, of course, Austria would have done anything to support our *démarche* at Constantinople.

Poincaré declared at the same time that, more than ever, he ardently desired to see this war terminated, and that he cherished the hope, that Russia and France would seize the first opportunity to achieve this object, and for this purpose invite the co-operation of the other Powers. An opportunity of this kind presented itself in the negotiations carried on at the present moment between the Turks and the Italians in Switzerland, this opportunity being all the more favourable, as the Turkish Government, in agreement with Italy, was about to send a special mission to Tripoli, to prepare the transition to the new *régime,* and to familiarize the Arabs with the idea of a possible reconciliation. In connection with the war, Poincaré also spoke of the future destiny of the islands in the Aegaean sea occupied by Italy. This question is causing most extraordinary anxiety to the French Government, which is afraid that Italy would not content herself with regarding them as a pawn for ending the war, but would continue the occupation until Turkey had guaranteed a certain measure of autonomy. France intends to protest most energetically against this, for she would regard such a state of things a menace to the political balance of power in the eastern parts of the Mediterranean. *To a question of M. Poincaré, as to the attitude of Russia towards a permanent Italian occupation of the Archipelago, I replied that we, too, would not be able to reconcile ourselves to such an attempt.*

In accordance with the wish of the Italian Chargé d'Affaires here, I took the opportunity of sounding Poincaré, whether there was any possibility to contract a Turkish loan in France even before the termination of the war. Poincaré promptly replied in the negative, adding however, that after the conclusion of peace, Turkey would be able, on substantial securities, to obtain the necessary means from France for the purpose of liquidating the war. Poincaré believes that Italy will likewise approach France with a similar request.

[1] The French government was still denying that there was such a "protectorate."

With the mutual assurance, to watch closely the events on the Balkans, and to exchange our views and informations, we agreed with Poincaré, that in case of complications, we should come to an agreement as to a common plan, according to circumstances, in order to obviate, by diplomatic means, a further aggravation of the situation. *Poincaré thought it necessary here to declare, that French public opinion would not allow the French Government to take up arms on account of purely Balkan Questions, unless Germany intervenes and brings about the "casus foederis," in which case Russia could, as a matter of fact, rely on the complete and strict fulfilment of the obligations which bind France to us.*

I, on my part, intimated to the Minister, that we were always prepared, resolutely to range ourselves upon the side of France, whenever those events, which were provided for in the Treaty, should occur, but that we, too, could not justify, before Russian public opinion, any active participation in a war caused by extra-European colonial questions, as long as the vital interests of France in Europe were not thereby affected. . . . .

To conclude, I should like to remark that I have been extremely glad to have made the acquaintance of Poincaré, and to have come into personal touch with him, all the more so, as through our exchange of views I gained the impression that Russia possesses in Poincaré a safe and reliable friend, who has at his service extraordinary statesmanlike prudence and an inflexible will. *When the critical moment in international relations arrives, it would be most desirable to have at the head of the Allied Government, if not Poincaré himself, at least a personality who has the same energetic character and who has as little fear of responsibility as the present French Prime Minister.*[1]

[1] The moment came in 1914, when M. Poincaré was president of the French republic. Without wishing to prejudice the case of M. Sazonoff, the question may be asked, was the last sentence of his Memorandum to the Russian diplomatists merely a speculation on possibilities, or an inadvertent reference to what he knew was coming?

IX

SETTLEMENT OF THE BAGDAD RAILROAD QUESTION

(December 1911—May 1913)

(744) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 16-29, 1911. *No.* 762.

The British Ambassador informed me yesterday, in confidence, that he had protested vigorously, although not officially, against the intention ascribed to the German Bagdad Railway Company to alter the direction of the line between Mossul and Bagdad in such wise as to approach Khanekin.[1] Such an alteration of the main line was not permissible, so long as negotiations were pending between London and Constantinople relating to the Bagdad-Persian Gulf line, as these negotiations were based on the assumption that the direction of the remaining portion of the Bagdad Railway will not be altered. *The Grand Vizier answered him, that he was not aware of any such intention on the part of the Bagdad Railway Company, but that he nevertheless admits the reasons put forward by the Ambassador.* The Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, likewise, declared to know nothing of any such intention of the German Company. He confirmed to the Ambassador, that the Turco-Persian Protocol, on the frontier delimitations, has been signed at Teheran, and that the Turkish members of the mixed commission had been already nominated and were in Constantinople. It appears from the newspapers that the Ministerial Council has ordered the Turkish troops on Persian territory to avoid all encounters with the Russian troops.

[1] See Document No. 757.

(745) *The Russian Consul at Bagdad to the Russian Embassy at Constantinople. Telegram, Jan. 30-Feb. 12, 1912.*

The survey for the Mossul-Bagdad sector is terminated and will be forwarded for confirmation to Frankfort and, then, to Constantinople. Meisner says, a new speed record has been established, as on an average one kilometer a day has been placed on the survey map, despite numerous technical difficulties. After a week's rest, the engineers will begin work on the Sedidje-Khanekin sector.

(746) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 10-23, 1912. No. 177.*

Our Consul at Bagdad telegraphs:

The plans of the line Bagdad-Mossul have been confirmed by the Minister of Communications. Meisner has gone to Basra to establish depots there.

(747) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 19-June 1, 1912. No. 92.*

According to reliable information, the "Deutsche Bank" requires further means for the Bagdad Railway, and has requested the Ottoman Bank to pay the unredeemable share of the obligations of about 60 million francs, or, otherwise, waive all claims to this share, as well as to a participation in further issues. As the Ottoman Bank has no available means at its disposal, it has requested, from the French Government, permission to realise the above sum, with the aid of French banks. The French Government, on the one hand, fears that in case of a refusal, France would be entirely excluded from the Bagdad undertaking, and, on the other hand, that such a realisation, even if not public, will be regarded as the first step towards permitting German securities to be quoted on the Paris Bourse. It is intended to apply to British banks. This question has been specially examined by the Ministerial Council. I shall watch further developments.

(748) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, June 1-14, 1912. No. 170.*

Nicolson has requested me to ask you, in strictest confidence, to what extent the Russian Government is really interested in parti

cipating with the fifth share in the Gulf sector of the Bagdad Railway. He says, he has put the same question to Cambon. Until now, negotiations between England and Turkey were based on the five powers receiving equal shares, *Germany having only insisted on its share being equal to that of any non-Turkish Power.* Nicolson said, Germany had in reality demanded more at the beginning, but that these demands had met with no success, and that Turkey, to-day, was opposed to five equal shares; on the other hand, it would now be possible to find a solution giving England 50 per cent, should France and Russia regard a participation on their part as not absolutely necessary.

(749) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, June* 4-17, 1912. *No.* 1131.

I refer to the telegram from Benckendorff, No. 170.

The question of our participation in the Southern sector of the Bagdad Railway is of little importance to us, although, we should thus have a possibility of being better informed on the conditions prevailing in this sector of the Bagdad Railway. *We declared our readiness, at the time, to take upon ourselves a fifth part, chiefly in order to maintain the principle of joint action in this matter, together with England and France, and to be able to give our vote in favour of these two Powers.*[1]

We are now ready to withdraw from participation, but would like to have previously the view of the French Government.

(750) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, June* 7-20, 1912. *No.* 113.

Your telegram No. 1131 received.

Poincaré has received a similar enquiry from London, but has not as yet replied, as negotiations are taking place at present at Berlin between the "Deutsche Bank," and the French groups participating in the Bagdad Railway enterprise. The outcome of these negotiations will determine whether the French remain in the undertaking, as Poincaré greatly desires, and this, on the other hand, must react on France's attitude in the above-mentioned question.

[1] Position due to lack of capital required to take up Russia's part.

Poincaré thanks us for our friendly enquiry, but requests us to wait as yet.

(751) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 13-26, 1912. *No.* 122.

Poincaré told me, that the connection between the enquiry made by the English, and the French negotiations with the "Deutsche Bank," is of a purely financial one. Should the Germans insist on the realisation of a part of the loan, which is in the *portefeuille* of the Ottoman Bank, then the latter will most likely apply to British banks, and this might lead to an agreement concerning the southern sector of the Bagdad Railway.[1]

(752) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 1-14, 1912. *No.* 145.

The newspapers have paid no attention to the information published by the "Echo de Paris." Our financial agent, however, considers the news of the formation of a new company to be most important. In his opinion, this would prove that the Bagdad Railway Company had resolved to commence the construction of the railway from Bagdad and to carry a line on to Sedidje, and a branch line to Khanekin, in order to force us by these means to construct the Khanekin-Teheran line. The paper does not mention, whether the new company has been recognised by the Turkish Government.

(753) *Sazonoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, Aug.* 8-21, 1912. *No.* 1591.

The French newspaper "Echo de Paris" of August 12, states that an arrangement has been arrived at, between Lynch and the "Deutsche Bank," to form a company under the name of "Society for Oriental River Transports," in order to convey on the Tigris and the Euphrates building material and labourers, as well as other goods for the Bagdad Railway. The Turkish Steamship Company is also to enter the concern. May I ask you to telegraph us, whether the news of the formation of such a company is correct—it would be the first Anglo-German enterprise.

[1] The Russian government still opposed British sole control of the Persian Gulf.

(754) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 10-23, 1912. *No.* 214.

Your telegram No. 1591 received.

I learned from Mallet that an agreement, between Lynch and the "Deutsche Bank," has, in fact, been signed. I have no details. The negotiations were carried on independently by Lynch, and only after they were completed, he enquired whether the British Government would raise an objection. As this latter does not regard the enterprise as being of any political importance it gave its consent.

(755) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug.* 25-*Sept.* 7, 1912. *No.* 186.

M. Rafalowitch,[1] who has just returned from Switzerland, requests me to inform you of the following:

On the conclusion of the agreement with Lynch, Gwinner[2] informed the Ottoman Bank at Paris, in its capacity as representative of the French group of the Bagdad Railway, that it was intended to build the next section not from the west, but starting from Bagdad, in order thus to reach Khanekin by 1916. The co-operation of the French group is important, as it has promised its participation in the realisation of the obligations for the new section from the west. Gwinner wishes to receive this assent for the Bagdad-Sedidje section as well. The Ottoman Bank gave the proposal a favourable reception. It is absolutely necessary to bring influence to bear upon it with the assistance of the French Government. The best means for altering the attitude of the French in this question would be to invite them to take part in the trans-Persian Railway, and begin work on the railway line Baku-Teheran as quickly as possible. Apparently, the French will gladly enter into negotiations with us, but there is no time to be lost, as they will sacrifice their co-operation in the Bagdad Railway only for participation in another paying enterprise. The last German action is a very decisive and successful one, and forces us to take immediate steps.

[1] Chief of the Russian political police in Paris.
[2] Of the Deutsche Bank.

(756) *Sazonoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, Aug. 28-Sept. 10, 1912. No. 1790.*

Our Consul-General at Bagdad telegraphs, that the agreement with the Turks was signed on September 3. Lynch provides the steamships, the "Deutsche Bank," the barges, the Turks, a third of the necessary capital. As Lynch will manage the whole enterprise, the latter is considered by public opinion as being merely an extension of the Lynch Steamship Company. No details are known here as yet.

(757) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Aug. 31-Sept. 13, 1912. No. 230.*

The project of constructing the branch line Bagdad-Khanekin, before the main line is finished, is, in Grey's opinion, opposed to Germany's interests and would be of advantage only to England, as this country would then gain control of the entire trade over the Persian Gulf. Grey, therefore, doubts that the Southern branch line will be finished by 1916, unless Khanekin be connected with the main line already constructed.

(758) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, April 26-May 9, 1913. No. 433.*

Nicolson informs me, that the former standpoint of the British Government has changed, and that the London Cabinet would no longer raise an objection to the construction of the Bagdad-Basra Railway, but upon the condition that two of the directors must be Englishmen.

(759) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, March 3-16, 1913. No. 1266.*

The newspapers report the ratification of the following Anglo-Turkish agreement:

Koweit is within the British sphere of influence. The English build a harbour at Basra, they take over the management of the Basra-Koweit line, and grant a loan of 3 million pounds sterling for reforms in East Anatolia and Syria. May I request you to inform us how far these statements are correct. Should other Powers re-

ceive compensations in connection with the solution of the question, we, too, must claim compensations.

(760) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 5-18, 1913. *No.* 354.

Your telegram No. 1266 received.

So far as I know, the news communicated by its correspondent to the "Matin" is exaggerated. The British Ambassador declares that he is not *au courant* with the course of the negotiations, as these take place in London. The Grand Vizier declared, that the negotiations were proceeding favourably, but that on two points an agreement had not been reached. *I presume that it is not a matter of an official recognition of the English protectorate over Koweit, but of the recognition, by Turkey, of the hereditary rights of the Sheik of Koweit, whom the Sublime Porte until now regarded as an ordinary Kaimakam.*[1] Such a recognition naturally strengthens British influence.

As to the conditions relative to the construction of the Bagdad Railway, these have been made known in my earlier reports, and I have no information that any alteration has taken place. The three million loan appears improbable to me, until the Paris Commission will have concluded its work. I presume that more definite news will be obtainable in London.

(761) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 6-19, 1913. *No.* 452.

Nicolson has confirmed that the account in the "Times" of May 4 is in accordance with facts. The negotiations with Turkey were conducted here with Hakki Pasha,[2] who, as it now appears, systematically informed the German Embassy here of the course of the negotiations. After Lichnowsky's [3] return, Gwinner's arrival is also expected, and then the exchange of views with the German Government will in all probability begin. As Turkey will hardly be successful in forming a special company for the construction

[1] Small official.
[2] Turkish ambassador at London.
[3] German ambassador at London.

of the final sector, Nicolson believes that this latter will eventually be left to the Bagdad Railway Company.

(762) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 8-21, 1913. No. 461.*

Grey requested Cambon and me, to call on him, and has informed us that he desires to speak to us on the subject of the Bagdad Railway; firstly, because England is tied by the Russian and French consent to the 4 per cent Customs increase, and secondly, because this question must be discussed by the Paris Commission. *Grey told us, the British Government no longer believes it possible further to oppose, in principle, the Bagdad Railway, yet it must safeguard its own interests in the construction of the line to the Persian Gulf. Hence the British Government is on the point of coming to an understanding with Turkey, which would regulate certain questions in the Persian Gulf, as for instance Koweit, the island of Bakhrin and shipping, whilst, on the other hand, Turkey is given the possibility of building the railway from Bagdad to Basra, on condition that it shall not go beyond Basra, in any case not without England's sanction, and that two of the directors of the railway must be English, without England otherwise participating in the enterprise, since all attempts to internationalise this railway line have been without avail.* The above directors would have no other task, than to represent British interests in tariff questions. These two conditions are of a preventive nature, England thus securing only a negative right. Under these conditions, England would be ready, in case of Russia and France giving their agreement, to give her consent to the 4 per cent Customs increase. Grey asked Cambon and me to submit this to our Governments.

In the mean time, Kühlmann,[1] who is dealing with this question with Mr. Parker, an official at the British Foreign Office, has declared that, although the matter concerns directly German interests, as the German concession extends not only to Basra but to the Persian Gulf as well, Germany would, nevertheless, raise no objections to an Anglo-Turkish understanding, on condition, however, that an equivalent be found for the financial means for the construction of the line to Bagdad and to Basra, since a part of the prospective means for this purpose comes from European Turkey,

[1] Counselor of the German embassy at London.

which now no longer forms a component part of the Turkish Empire.[1] This is the state of the negotiations with Germany.

Grey pointed out to us, that England's consent to the Customs increase had only had the purpose of safeguarding her interests, in so far as these are rendered questionable by the Bagdad-Basra enterprise. These guarantees could be secured on no other basis. Grey replied to my question, whether the Bagdad-Khanekin line had been mentioned in the course of these negotiations, that, apart from unauthorised financial circles, the question of this line had not been touched on, and that the British Government would conduct no negotiations respecting a railway line in which Russia was directly interested.

(763) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 13-26, 1913. *No.* 260.

With respect to the Anglo-Turkish negotiations, the information available here is about the same as that in the possession of our Ambassadors at Constantinople and in London. England renounces the construction of the Bagdad-Basra line, but appoints two members of the board. *The Basra-Koweit sector is not to be built at all. Turkey recognises England's position at Koweit and on the Persian Gulf.*[2] This question has now been definitely settled.

Regarding England's negotiations with Germany, Pichon believes the Germans to be desirous of receiving England's consent to all surpluses of the "Public Debt" [3] being used to guarantee the Bagdad enterprise. *Grey has promised to make no decision, before arriving at an understanding with France.* The Paris Cabinet is debating the attitude it should take towards this new situation.

Connected herewith is the question of the realisation of the 8 million francs which represent the French share in the two last sectors of the Bagdad Railway. The "Deutsche Bank" insists on this realisation, whilst the French Government is still disinclined to ad-

[1] As the result of annexation by the Balkan Allies, following the Balkan War of 1912.

[2] This was Great Britain's great desideratum; control of the southern railhead of the Bagdad railroad, the port of Koweit, and the Persian Gulf—with none of which the Russians were pleased.

[3] The international administration of certain Turkish debts and mortgaged revenues.

mit such an issue on the French market. The question will probably be settled by the establishment of an "Omnium" [1] for these French railway enterprises in Turkey. *As to the Bagdad-Basra line, France will probably also demand for herself two places on the board.* In any case, negotiations with Turkey, and also with Germany, will become necessary for France, and Germany will very likely endeavour to obtain France's consent also to the use of the surplus income of the "Public Debt."

(764) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, May* 17-30, 1913. *No.* 264.

I refer to my telegram No. 260.

I learn from an interview with Pichon, that my communication to the effect that France claims two places on the board is erroneous. Pichon declares, that the negotiations imminent between France and Germany principally aim at securing for France the construction and development of a railway-net in Syria and Anatolia.[2] *Pichon intends to use the presence of the German financial representatives, who have arrived here for the Paris Financial Conference, to begin an exchange of views with them. In any case, he will keep us informed as to the course of the negotiations.*

[1] Trust or Syndicate.

[2] The railroads of Syria, to wit: The lines Mersina-Tarsus-Adana, Rodjo-Aleppo, and Aleppo-Homs-Ryak-Beyrut-Damascus were under French control at that time, and no other concessions were asked for by the French, whose control of the territory was almost absolute. The Bagdad railroad issue was thus settled, after Russia and Great Britain had exhausted their objection "on principle."

X

ENTENTE PREPARATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN WAR

(December 1912—June 1913)

(765) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 23-Dec. 6, 1912. No. 373.*

Carlin, the Swiss Minister in London, told me that the Russian Minister in Bern had informed the State Department at Bern, that the speech of Bethmann-Hollweg, and the uninterrupted Austrian armaments, cause the political situation to appear as very strained, and that the Russian Government wishes to inform the Federal Authorities of this, with a view to the defence of Swiss neutrality. Carlin tells me, that he has been instructed by his Government to ask Grey, what attitude England would assume in case of a conflict. Grey replied, that England's attitude would depend upon the circumstances and upon the number of the powers which took part in the conflict. This means, that Grey repeated to Carlin the answer which he had given to me and to Cambon. According to Carlin, the Swiss Minister in Paris has received the same instructions.

(766) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 23-Dec. 6, 1912. No. 372.*

Cambon told me, confidentially, that, at first in his own name, then, by order of M. Poincaré, he had directed Grey's attention to certain press rumours, according to which a certain *rapprochement* had taken place between England and Germany, with the consequent loosening of the Entente and the Triple-Entente. Cambon has been instructed to declare, that these rumours were very widespread in Paris, were making a very bad impression there, and that they would result in Poincaré having an interpellation addressed

to him on this matter in the Chamber. *Grey replied, that these rumours had not the slightest foundation in fact, that nothing new had occurred between England and Germany, and that both Governments had but discussed colonial, and other quite subordinate, questions in a conciliatory and amicable manner. Cambon asked, thereupon, whether he could authorize Poincaré to repeat these words in the Chamber. Sir Edward gave his consent. Cambon told me, that, according to custom, this part of Poincaré's speech would be submitted to Grey for approval.*

Rumours of this kind have been chiefly circulated since Prince Lichnowsky declared in a public speech in London, that the relations of England and Germany were excellent and had never been better, and since a similar utterance had occurred in a speech of the German Chancellor. These assertions had remained without an answer, and had impressed the public.[1]

(767) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 28-*Dec.* 11, 1912. *No.* 381.

I am in receipt of the following confidential communication from Cambon.

The French Ambassador has been instructed, to submit to Grey the text of a speech on English policy, which the French Minister of Foreign Affairs is going to deliver in the Chamber. The contents of the speech were about as follows:—

"Certain doubts having arisen in the public mind, concerning the present orientation of British policy, Grey took the initiative to declare to the French Ambassador in London that no change had occurred in British policy, that no new relations to other powers had been entered into and that the close entente with France continued to exist in its full scope."

Grey at once agreed to this text, and merely requested to allow Mr. Asquith to read it. The latter, too, declared himself in full agreement with it, with the exception of a single alteration: The French text read: "public mind." Asquith preferred to have it "the public mind in France."

Grey, furthermore, declared to the French Ambassador, that the British Government had no designs upon Syria.[2]

[1] It was dangerous now to even use the customary diplomatic pleasantries.
[2] Another instance of how little faith there was within the Entente itself.

(768) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 21, 1912-*Jan.* 3, 1913. *No.* 465.

Personal. *Grey told me, he would send Buchanan*[1] *a telegram with reference to the support of England, in which the diplomatic support of the London Cabinet would be assured to us.* He has now sent to me a copy of this telegram. I have shown it to Cambon and asked him his opinion. Cambon believes that it is not necessary to generalise; *that when special questions arise, which concern England, the London Cabinet, usually, gives such conditioned assurances; that this has been so with him, Cambon, during the Agadir incident and even earlier.* You will see from my report, that Grey expressed himself somewhat differently to me. This seems to confirm the personal opinion of Cambon. *My personal view remains, that the military support of England will depend upon general circumstances which cannot be determined beforehand.*[2]

(769) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Jan.* 27-*Feb.* 9, 1913. *No.* 91.

The unexpected declarations of Admiral Tirpitz, in the Reichstag-Commission, are understood here as meaning that Germany recognises the supremacy of England at Sea. Without meeting with too great a confidence, these declarations have, nevertheless, made a great impression upon the English Press. The "Times," and the leading newspapers, emphasize this event with satisfaction, even though not without raising several points of objection.

(770) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Jan.* 30-*Feb.* 12, 1913. *No.* 276.

Personal. *We are of opinion that an alarming symptom is to be discerned in the last speech of Admiral Tirpitz, and in the effort of German diplomacy, to bring about a* rapprochement *with England. We should be glad to know, in what degree machinations of that sort might find a favourable soil in London, and how they would react upon the attitude of the English Government in the present crisis.*

[1] British ambassador at St. Petersburg.

[2] British "freedom of action." Though attached to France and Russia by political ententes, Great Britain shunned definite terms, and by means of this policy elevated herself to the position of *arbiter mundis.* This document and No. 765 refer to the crisis following the Balkan war and Serbia's claim to a port on the Adriatic.

(771) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Jan. 31-Feb. 13, 1913. No. 105.*

Your telegram No. 276 received.

The efforts made by German diplomacy are obvious, but the speech of Tirpitz, which had at first been received with satisfaction as a recognition of the supremacy of England at sea, has, after mature consideration, made only an ephemeral impression. One is still convinced here, that the Berlin Cabinet is sincerely striving to preserve Peace. **This has resulted in an actual decrease of the tension which, as I have reported, has led to the co-operation of the Cabinets of London and Berlin. At this moment, I consider this not only not injurious to us, but advantageous, as Grey has now the possibility of exerting influence at Berlin, and of insisting that the Berlin Cabinet exert its influence at Vienna.[1] Grey believes that you may do the same with advantage, although he is well aware of the difficulties.** *Such is the character of the rapprochement of which German diplomacy speaks so openly and so loudly. Its peaceful tendency guarantees a certain success, but the solidarity of the Ambassadors of the Triple-Alliance, during the deliberations of the London Ambassadorial Conference,[2] is in reality not so complete, as would appear from my telegraphic reports containing the protocols of the meetings.*

(772) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Feb. 15-28, 1913.*

Personal and quite confidential.

Cambon informs me that Bethmann-Hollweg informed his brother,[3] privately, that the increase of the German army has no aggressive significance, but was rendered necessary by the sudden creation of important military states in the Balkans, coupled with the fact that Austria, considered as an ally, can no longer be regarded so important a factor as heretofore.[4]

[1] Austria-Hungary was opposing the efforts of Serbia to gain a port on the Adriatic Sea, in which she had the secret support of the British government, which realized that a Serbian port on the Adriatic might easily become a Russian naval base in the Mediterranean, which was also realized by Italy. Germany had shown but little interest in the question.

[2] Called together to straighten out the tangle resulting from the war of the Balkan League upon the Turks.

[3] Jules Cambon, French ambassador at Berlin.

[4] Which was generally accepted throughout Europe.

(773) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Sazonoff. Confidential Report, March* 1-14, 1913.

In my telegram No. 37, I informed you of those extraordinary financial sacrifices, which the German Government thought necessary to impose upon the privileged classes, in order to pay for the strengthening of German military power; also, that the projected single assessment, which is to produce approximately a milliard marks will apparently create no serious discontent here.

Yesterday, the Cabinet Council approved a new bill for military requirements. All the Prussian Ministers, as well as the Finance Ministers of all the Federal German States, appeared at the Ministerial Council, with the Chancellor in the chair. The project was handed over to the proper commissions for investigation and approval. The results of this examination are still kept a strict secret.

The "Cologne Gazette," in an officially inspired telegram from Berlin, declares that these extraordinary military measures could not be postponed; *firstly, because of the bellicose-national aspirations of the Slav countries; secondly, because of the elimination of the Turkish influence and military power in the Balkans by those of the Slavs, and, thirdly, because of the material numerical increase of the French and Russian armies.*[1]

The spectre, or rather the emergency, of a possible Austro-Russian conflict has produced a strong movement for increasing Russia's military preparedness. Even if the Austro-Hungarian army still deserves the same confidence as before, yet the strength and power of her possible enemies have been materially augmented. In view of all this, the German Government has become convinced, that it would be an unpardonable omission on its part, not to bring into play all the military strength available. Since Germany, in this matter, follows the example of France,[2] *it is felt here that the German Government's proposed military reforms are devoid of every aggressive character.*[3]

As Your Excellency is aware, in Germany only a certain part of the conscripted young men were hitherto drafted into actual military service, the remainder—to the extent of from fifty to sixty thousand men—

[1] Point three was considered the more urgent by Germany, because an actual fact.

[2] France had re-introduced a three-year term of military service, which years ago she had discarded in favor of a two-year term.

[3] A very complete statement.

were turned over to the so-called supplementary reserve, where they were not even trained. Henceforth, the Government intends to draft all conscripted young men into actual service, without exception, thus raising the active strength of the army annually by from fifty to sixty thousand men, or by one-hundred or one-hundred-and-twenty-thousand men, for two years, considering the two-years active service in force here.

In one of my friendly and confidential conversations with the Secretary of State, I touched casually on the question of the immense and apparently inexplicable new military measures, the cost of which entails an expense of hundreds of millions.

Jagow replied, that the annual increase of the army by fifty thousand men will cost so much that the ordinary, though materially augmented, budget would not suffice. Therefore, the Government, willingly or unwillingly, feels obliged to levy a single assessment on the richer classes. The Secretary of State added, that such a measure could not be repeated. According to Jagow, the new annual credits for military requirements will call for two-hundred millions, not for two-hundred and fifty millions.

The necessity of filling up the vacancies in the army, was explained by the Secretary of State by the fact that the present numerical strength of the French Army is but a trifle less than that of the German army, and by the fact that the unfavourable geographical situation of Germany compels her to defend both western and eastern frontiers.

An additional reason, why the German Government must feel anxiety about strengthening its military power, must, in my opinion, also be sought for in the ever-increasing suspicion here of Austria-Hungary, who can hardly feel quite satisfied with the support given her by Berlin in her selfish policy. This view is shared by my French colleague, who likewise inclines to the belief that the relations between Berlin and Vienna are each day growing cooler, one might even say, more strained.[1]

France, surely, does not fall behind Germany in matters of national defense. But a further increase of the French Army, apart from the difficulties attending the introduction of a three years' military service, is rendered impossible by lack of men. It is beyond doubt, that Germany's extraordinary military measures will also awaken a serious echo

[1] Due largely to the fact that influential elements in Germany considered Austria-Hungary more a liability than an asset of the Triple Alliance.

in Russia, all the more, since we cannot be deterred by any such argument as the lack of men. Now the question arises, what will be the position of Europe, armed from head to foot in an armour of steel, and groaning under the insupportable burden of military taxes. The tension, it would appear, will become such, that, at length, war will become inevitable. But no matter how terrible may be the consequences of a general conflict, the advantages, in my opinion, would all be on our side, especially if the alliance of Balkan States not only survives the present crisis but grows stronger, conscious of its growing importance in the matter of the European balance of power, and of the power which it may oppose to Austro-Hungarian aggression. Should we succeed in bringing Roumania into that alliance, then the preponderance of our Entente over the Triple Alliance of the Central Powers would become still more apparent.

One must not forget the bitterness, with which many German press organs now point to France as the one guilty of provoking any future armed conflicts. *The new French armaments are attributed to French hatred of Germany and to the newly revived idea of "revanche" in France. Certain German newspapers also accuse Russia of aggressive schemes against Germany, but the German Government, which holds itself wholly aloof from all such attacks, severely condemns them in a strictly official article published in yesterday's "Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung," a cutting of which is enclosed.*

Returning to the matter of the single assessment of the privileged classes planned by Germany, for paying the military requirements, I think, I cannot be wrong, when I point out that this kind of single assessment must have very deleterious after-effects upon the whole economic and financial conditions of the country. *The withdrawal of a whole milliard of marks from the national wealth, in view of the tightness of the money market, may well lead to a disturbance of the regular course of German economic life.*[1]

(774) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, March 28-April* 10, 1913. *No.* 906.

I beg you to communicate to me the most precise details it is possible to ascertain, regarding the purpose of the journey of Prince Henry of Prussia to England.

[1] Germany had considerable reserve resources and no depression resulted.

(775) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, March 29-April* 11, 1913. *No.* 330.

Your telegram 906 received.

One of the reasons, which, contrary to my intention, induced me to hasten the communication of your telegram 894 to Grey, was the arrival of Prince Henry.[1] *This arrival was so unexpected that the Foreign Office was advised of it only yesterday.*

In reading the telegram in question to Nicolson, *I remarked to him that the arrival of Prince Henry seemed to make this communication extremely timely. Cambon made a similar remark to Grey.* Grey, who had as yet entered into no relations with Prince Henry, or Lichnowsky, in this matter, replied to Cambon:

"Should Prince Henry have come hither in order to resume the step undertaken last winter, he shall receive exactly the same answer." [2]

(776) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 1-14, 1913. *No.* 344.

Personal. *Nicolson told me, that Prince Henry discussed no political questions with the King. As a matter of fact, it was chiefly the Cumberland wedding, and the journey of King George to Berlin, which were discussed. The latter was to be not of an official, but merely of a family, nature. Prince Henry saw neither Grey, nor any other Minister. He left again to-day. Nicolson tells me, that, this time, the journey of Prince Henry concerned merely private affairs, and the placing of orders for motorcars. Saturday and Sunday he spent with Prince Münster.* This communication of Nicolson confirms my personal observation.

(777) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, April* 6-19, 1913. *No.* 355.

Nicolson tells me that the journey of the King to Berlin was to be a family visit. His Majesty will not be accompanied by any Minister.

(778) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, May* 3-16, 1913. *No.* 1263.

Is it true that Morley's journey to Berlin is a political mission, with a view to English-German negotiations as to their interests in Asia Minor?

[1] Brother of Emperor William.
[2] The step in question was an attempt at reconciliation

(779) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May 6-19, 1913. No. 450.*

Your telegram 1263 received.

From private information, and Nicolson's categorical declaration, it is clear that Morley's journey has no connection with Asia Minor. The journey is of an entirely private nature, *even though our naval agent asserts that the question of naval armaments has been discussed in Berlin.*[1]

(780) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, June 14-27, 1913. No. 572.*

Grey asked me to call on him. He declared to me, that he was extraordinarily gratified with the results of the visit of Poincaré and Pichon in London. *The same was said to me, yesterday, by Pichon, who declared that the Cabinets of London and Paris were in every respect in full agreement.* Grey related to me that, apart from the general policy, and the *entente* between the three Powers, the conversations between him and Pichon, and later between him and Poincaré, in the presence of Nicolson and Cambon, referred mainly to current questions of the day. As regards Albania, it was pointed out, that it was necessary to create a provisional organisation, without excluding, for the future, a definite settlement, which, however, was not possible at the present Ambassadorial Conference. With respect to the southern boundary of Albania, the English and French Ministers agreed that neither of the two Powers was disposed to support by armed force the transfer of Koritza to Greece, and that it was, therefore, necessary to revert to Grey's proposal of an international commission; since Austria, however, has rejected that proposal, the Vienna Cabinet should be asked for the conditions on which it would be inclined to accept this proposal. The French view is, that if Austria insisted on the cession of Koritza to Albania, the negotiations must proceed on that basis. Grey adopted that point of view and sent a corresponding telegram to Vienna.

In accordance with your wishes, Grey and Pichon took counsel together with regard to the attitude we should take in case of hostilities breaking out among the Balkan allies. Neither of the two

[1] They were discussed.

Powers sees any other means of preventing a general war than the principle of intervention, if Austria agrees to that. Grey believes that Austria might possibly impose the condition, that the decisions arrived at by the Powers, should, at all events, be maintained; he believes like Pichon, that such a condition would be acceptable and perhaps even desirable.

The Ministers also occupied themselves with Asiatic Turkey. They agreed that a partition into spheres of influence was not possible,[1] *for this would first of all lead to an intervention, on the part of other powers than those of the Triple-Entente, which must then lead to a partition of Turkey, which would bring about a crisis this time without any hope of preventing a war.* They, therefore, agreed that it was necessary to support Turkey to a certain degree, and by means, about which an agreement of all the Powers would have to be reached.

Grey is extremely satisfied with his discussions with Poincaré and Pichon since they, no less than the reception accorded to the French Ministers by the English public, had greatly strengthened the Entente. There is no doubt, that the reception accorded to Poincaré surpassed in warmth the visits of Loubet and Faillières. This found emphatic expression. Cambon, in a conversation with myself, confirmed everything Grey had told me, and added, that your proposal, concerning Argyrokastro, was discussed, but that the conclusion had been reached, that Greece could, on no account, reckon upon Argyrokastro, and that Italy, backed up in this respect by Austria and Germany, would no more give way than Austria with regard to Koritza. The Ministers spoke, besides, about Morocco and Colonial questions, but I did not further insist upon details.

[1] As had been done with Persia—a highly moral topic for Sir Edward to discuss.

XI

THE ENTENTE AND THE GERMAN MILITARY MISSION TO TURKEY

(November 1913—January 1914)

(781) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, Nov.* 8-21, 1913.

My telegrams Nos. 264 and 271 contain a brief report of the negotiations carried on here by Secretary of State Kokowtzeff regarding the mission of German military instructors to Turkey. I venture to add details which I was unable to mention in my telegrams.

Emperor William has described in detail, to the Secretary of State, the political situation in the Balkans arising from the most recent occurrences, which, according to His Majesty's view, might lead to still further complications, especially on the part of Bulgaria—"and of Greece," the Secretary of State added. *The Emperor insisted on the necessity of preserving the Turkish Realm in its present form, to which both the Czar of Russia, as well as the King of England, had agreed during their last visit to Berlin.* Emperor William then mentioned the request which the Turkish Government had addressed to Germany and England, asking them to send the necessary officials and instructors to Turkey in order to reorganize the administration.

King George declined this request, and merely consented to send English naval officers to Constantinople, "whilst I have been compelled to give my assent to the despatch of army instructors," said the Emperor, "I was unable to act otherwise, even if it were only for the reason, that our former 20 years' activity has not met with

success, and has resulted in many reproaches being levelled against Germany; *and no less for the reason, that Turkey would have appealed to another Power, which no doubt would have granted the request of the Turkish Government.*"

The Emperor added, that it might possibly have been more advantageous for Russia if French officers had undertaken this task, but for Germany this would have meant too distinct a moral defeat. *Kokowtzeff replied to this, that such a moral defeat of Germany would not have corresponded with the interests of Russia, since she is linked to Germany by ties of traditional friendship.* The Emperor expressed to him his sincere thanks for these words.

Thereupon Secretary of State Kokowtzeff sought to convince the Emperor, that the best way out of the present difficult situation would be to revert to the former idea of ordinary instructors, to which the Emperor replied with animation, that this would indeed be impossible for the reason that this kind of former experiment had been entirely unsuccessful.

At the present period, the instructors must have the necessary power to re-educate the Turkish officers, and to drag them out of the political mire in which they are so engrossed with politics as to forget the duties of their service.[1]

Only the power of military command can accomplish this. You are already acquainted with the arguments of our Secretary of State against the concentration of a model troop detachment in Constantinople, as well as the perfectly sincere explanation of the Emperor that he had conceived the whole question from a totally different point of view, and that nothing was farther from his mind than to cause Russia any kind of difficulties whatsoever.

When Secretary of State Kokowtzeff mentioned, that the German Military Mission might perhaps take up quarters at Adrianople, I ventured to point out to him, that this would probably cause great excitement in Bulgaria, and still further estrange this country from us; for this reason, Smyrna, or any other town in Asia Minor, at a certain distance from the Armenian frontier, would be a suitable place for the German officers.

[1] Was to be attempted by placing the whole administration of the Ottoman military establishment under a foreign Military Mission—a German one as things developed. The Ottoman navy and coast defenses were then under the command of a British Naval Mission, headed by Admiral Limpus.

(782) *Sazonoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, Nov.* 12-25, 1913. *No.* 3220.

Since we have received news that Germany insists on the general military instructor obtaining command over an army corps and a division in Constantinople, we have called Germany's earnest attention to the fact, how difficult it would be for us to permit our Embassy to remain in a city in which, so as to speak, a German garrison was quartered.[1] **At the same time, we pointed out that we should have no objections to German officers having the power of military command in other districts of Asia Minor, not too close to our frontier. Our friendly suggestion has so far been answered evasively by the Berlin Cabinet.** *Consequently, we deem it most desirable to ascertain whether the French and British Governments consider such a situation compatible with their interests.*

If it should appear inexpedient to raise further objections in Berlin, a joint step could be taken in Constantinople to point out, to the Sublime Porte *that the concessions made to Germany raised the question of equivalent compensations for the other Powers.*[2]

(783) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1913. *No.* 790.

Your telegram No. 3220 received.

Nicolson, personally, is also of the opinion that it would not be desirable to place the garrison of Constantinople under the command of a German general. The British Government's opinion will be communicated to you to-morrow after Grey's return.

(784) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 13-26, 1913. *No.* 555.

Your telegram No. 3320 received.

Have communicated its contents to Pichon, who is entirely of your opinion, and who already raised the necessary objections in Constantinople. He has informed Rifaat Pasha,[3] *that, in case the Sublime Porte*

[1] The Germans did not raise that point when Russian and British troops occupied much of Persia and threatened to garrison its capital, Teheran.

[2] Great Britain had the Naval Mission, just then under command of Admiral Limpus.

[3] Turkish ambassador at Paris.

should not renounce the realisation of this plan, France would demand special compensation of a moral and political nature. In the course of the conversation, Pichon emphasized again, that France could not agree to the Germans having the command at Smyrna or at Beirut and that he had mentioned Adrianople to the Sublime Porte. Pichon says, that his explanation, evidently, made a deep impression upon Rifaat, who expressed his personal conviction that this question could be settled.

(785) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov.* 15-28, 1913. *No.* 795.

Your telegram 3220, and that from Paris 555, received.

Grey telegraphed to O'Beirne yesterday, that he is of your opinion, that we could not permit the garrison of Constantinople to be placed under the command of a German general.[1] What Nicolson and Cambon said, forced me to come to the conclusion, that the Minister concedes in principle the possibility of compensations for us, but that it might be difficult actually to find such compensations. *Pichon's first proposal, that officers of other countries should also receive such posts of command, he deems impracticable and not in keeping with our interests, for our main object, the removal of the Germans from Constantinople, would not thereby be attained.*

Besides this would mean the first step towards the partition of Turkey. Cambon is of the same opinion. Both doubt that pressure, brought in common to bear upon the Sublime Porte, would have any result, for the latter is, apparently, tied by promises to Emperor William whose *amour propre* must be taken into consideration. *Grey thinks it best to continue friendly negotiations with Germany,* in order to move her to change her original plan, that is, to appoint a German officer as head of the Military Academy, to which an Agency telegram from Berlin makes allusion to-day. Grey believes, that Emperor William, as well as the Imperial Chancellor, are seeking a pretext in order to extricate themselves from this situation, but that *a command outside of Constantinople, as for instance Adrianople, would not be a way out of the difficulty.*

It is feared here, that the hostile attitude of the Russian press,

[1] While the British Naval Mission was in charge of the coast fortifications of Turkey, and the Ottoman fleet, lying in, and near, Constantinople.

as for example, the "Novoe Vremia," will have the opposite effect, as Emperor William might feel hurt, and is apparently entertaining the idea of defending himself against the criticism directed against von der Goltz Pasha.[1]

(786) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 19-*Dec.* 2, 1913. *No.* 798.

The negotiations between the Cabinets of London and Paris have lead to both Governments determining to instruct their representatives at Constantinople to address an official enquiry to the Sublime Porte,[2] *as to whether there was an actual intention of giving German officers command over the Turkish troops in Constantinople. Everything else will depend upon the reply of the Sublime Porte. Grey and Asquith share Pichon's opinion, that such a command would put the Embassies in an impossible situation, and that the sovereignty of the Sultan, and the independence of Turkey would be involved.*[3] They are of the opinion, that Russia ought to confine herself to continue her friendly negotiations with the German Government, more especially with the German Court, the *amour propre* and sensitiveness of the latter having to be especially considered.

In case this should not lead to any result, France and England concede the necessity of guarantees for all the Powers, most particularly for Russia with regard to the Dardanelles, the entrance and outlet of the Bosphorus.[4]

It is anticipated here, that Germany will not oppose the granting of compensations to the other Powers, but one deems it more proper not to broach this question for the time being, as it is almost impossible to find such compensations.

(787) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 19-*Dec.* 2, 1913. *No.* 799.

Continuation of my telegram No. 798.

A misunderstanding has arisen in the course of the exchange of telegrams between Paris and London. *Grey has agreed with Pichon, that the enquiry in question is to be addressed to the Sublime*

[1] Who had been in charge of Ottoman military reforms hitherto.
[2] The Ottoman government—Bab-i-Ali.
[3] Which independence had been discussed by these gentlemen in June, 1913, in a manner made clear in document No. 780.
[4] Nothing was further from Grey's mind, of course, as is shown by the termination of this controversy.

Porte by all three Ambassadors in Constantinople,—those of Russia, England and France. Grey believes the notes must be identical, but that they must not be handed in simultaneously. *Grey believes that it would be better if the negotiations in Berlin were for the time being conducted by us alone.*[1]

(788) *Sazonoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, Nov. 24-Dec. 7, 1913. No. 3309.*

Urgent. Identical to Paris.

We consider it desirable that the three Ambassadors should at once address themselves to the Turkish Government with the following identical note, *which has been drawn up according to the English proposal.* We have desisted from mentioning the Dardanelles, since it is clear from the Iradé [2] that they are not under command of the German general.[3]

As to the compensations, we shall mention them only later, after having agreed as to their nature. Please, ask the Minister to send necessary instructions to the Ambassador in Constantinople.

Text of the Note:

"The fact that the command over the Turkish Army Corps in Constantinople has been entrusted to a German general would create for him a position which hitherto, neither a German, nor any other, officer has ever occupied in Constantinople. *As a result, the whole diplomatic Corps would be in the power of Germany.*[4] *Besides, the German General would be in a position to take military measures which might call the sovereignty of the Sultan in question. The actul guarantee of the integrity of the Turkish Realm, which consists in the balance of Powers, would have vanished. Indeed, if Germany should obtain such a privileged position in Constantinople, the other Powers would be forced to safeguard their interests in Turkey.*[5]

[1] While he played his usual hide and seek.
[2] Proclamation of the Sultan of Turkey.
[3] Which could not be, seeing that the British Admiral Limpus commanded them.
[4] As it was when Russian troops occupied Persia.
[5] It should be borne in mind that this note was the result of a British proposal. Rather blunt—an ultimatum. The note was an ugly reminder to the Turks that their government existed entirely by the grace of the so-called "Concert of Europe." Mention is made of this fact to draw attention to the impossible situation of the Turkish government. Ever obliged to mind the interests of the Powers in Turkey it had really very little opportunity to occupy itself with its internal affairs, the Powers having to be pleased with them also.

(789) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 26-Dec. 9, 1913. No. 802.*

Grey is of the opinion that the note, proposed in your telegram 3309, *is premature and that it would entail certain disadvantages; he believes, we ought to revert to the first draft without expressing any kind of threats at the close.* The three Ambassadors would have to agree upon a mutual declaration, which would express their unanimity, and, then, make verbal representations, one after the other, in order to learn the contents of the Iradé. On this occasion, they might add earnest observations as to the sovereignty of the Sultan, the régime of the Straits and the whole situation in Constantinople. *At first, however, they would have to confine themselves to a step which would leave the possibility of further negotiations open.*

Grey has promised, to communicate to me the contents of such a telegram. I have told Grey that the Russian Government attaches the utmost importance to this question, and that it relies on England's firm support; *that, however, it is its intention to act with the greatest caution in order to avoid a* cul-de-sac, *thus rendering a retreat of the German Government possible.*

(790) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 26-Dec. 9, 1913. No. 803.*

Grey tells me, that Kühlmann took the initiative this morning to explain to him, that a German command over the army corps of Constantinople had been contemplated only because von der Goltz Pasha had not had the possibility of carrying his orders into execution, as Turkish indifference had brought all his efforts to nought. According to him, it is, above all, a question of guaranteeing the proper training of the troops, and *the Army Corps of Constantinople has been selected, only because all the military academies are situated in the Capital and its environs. It was a question of a Mission which was analogous to that of the English Admiral.*[1] Kühlmann added, that he had been instructed to clear up the whole matter, for the newspapers had misrepresented the actual situation and had caused a very regrettable press campaign. *Grey replied that the latter point was not in accordance with the facts; it was more than a press campaign; that the Powers were interested in everything per-*

[1] Limpus.

taining to Constantinople, and that the **Iradé** *in question, the details of which were not known to him, infringed the sovereign rights of the Sultan, and might call in question the situation of the Straits and of Constantinople itself. As to the British Admiral, Grey declared this to be another question, since he was a non-combatant.*[1] *Grey would re-examine the contract between the Admiral and the Turkish Government,*[2] *and for that reason he was unable to add any more at present. Grey told me, that Kühlmann had not been astonished at the communication of the intended step in Constantinople, and had merely added, that he was convinced that the German General was, like the British Admiral, a non-combatant.*

(791) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov.* 26-*Dec.* 9, 1913. *No.* 804.

Confidential. *Cambon has informed Grey, that his Government has accepted your proposal.* **Cambon's personal opinion is, that Grey's standpoint is the right one, since this relieves the position of the Turkish Government, all the more so, as the German plan is not in the least popular in Constantinople. The German plan had originated in Berlin military circles, which consider a repetition of the position occupied by von der Goltz Pasha to be impossible.** *Cambon fears the effect of a threatening note at the present moment. He tells me, that the first proposal had been made by France, and had then been accepted by Grey.* **The expression used by the English was "Communication." It seems to me, that we should accept Grey's proposal, as it offers certain advantages, and Grey will not decide to go beyond it at present.**

(792) *Paraphrase of a telegram from Sir E. Grey to the British Ambassador at Constantinople. Dec.* 9, 1913.

I have seen the Russian Ambassador, who informs me that Sazonoff is desirous of making a communication to the Sublime Porte concerning the German military command. I am of the

[1] A very fine distinction.

[2] General von Sanders Pasha also was a contract officer. The entire question was one of an individual making a contract with a foreign government; with the consent of his own government since certain political and military considerations were involved.

opinion that every Ambassador should make this communication separately and verbally and that this communication should have the following contents:

We have heard that a German general has been given a very effective and far-reaching command in Constantinople; we hear that this command would create for him a position which hitherto has been occupied by no foreign officer in Turkey. We assume that Turkey would do nothing, by which the independence of the Turkish Government, or the safety of the Straits and Constantinople, would be brought into question. *Other Powers, however, are very much interested in this question, and we should be glad to have the Sublime Port communicate with us, concerning the agreement which has been concluded with the German general, in order to be able to define the function he is to perform and the position he is to occupy.*

(793) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov. 27-Dec. 10, 1913. No. 3334.*

Urgent. Your telegram 802 received.

The British Chargé d'Affaires has informed us of the new draft which differs considerably from the first English proposal. We have made the latter the basis of our note, without mentioning the possibility of compensations and the question of the Straits. *This change in the attitude of England in a question of such importance to us, affects us all the more unpleasantly, since it is precisely we, who have advised caution.*[1] The consequence is a very regrettable loss of time. The proposal of an identical action, of the three Powers in Constantinople, has also emanated from England. *In regard to ourselves, we cannot assent to the new English proposal, for, to our mind, such an empty communication would be rather harmful than useful.*

Please, inform Grey of these considerations, and ask him whether he is prepared to agree to the following alterations in the text given in my telegram No. 3309:

The last sentence which begins with the words "indeed if Germany," would be eliminated and replaced by another which is also taken from the first English draft:

[1] Having gone too far in being illogical, Grey had retreated from his first position.

"Turkey must concede the importance of the above considerations in her own interests, considerations which, in a greater or lesser degree, affect all other Powers which possess interests in the Turkish Empire."

I request you to state to Grey, that, in our opinion, such a step in Constantinople cannot be considered as directed against Germany, since the latter has been informed of this and has not raised an objection. On the other hand, any new delay would call the success of the step in question, especially after the text has been modified.

(794) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Nov. 27-Dec. 10, 1913. No. 3335.*

I refer to my telegram No. 3334.

If the British Government insists on preferring a verbal communication to a written one, you may accede to such a step, and read aloud the text of the verbal declaration to Turkey. It will be desirable in any case to agree upon an identical text.

(795) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 28-Dec. 11, 1913. No. 806.*

Your telegram 3334 received.

After careful examination of the question, Grey told me that he would send us his answer as soon as possible. *However, I do not believe that it will prove different. According to his idea, a step taken conjointly by three Powers would be so important an event and would cause such a sensation, that, quite apart from the text of the communication, the whole situation would be rendered most acute, without the three Powers having come to an understanding as to what their future attitude should be.*

For this reason, he insists that the first step should above all be an inquiry intended to learn the contents of the contract between the Turkish Government and the German general,[1] so that the three Powers might, in this way, take account of the difference which would exist in the position of this general in the Turkish army and the former position of von der Goltz Pasha. *Grey believes that*

[1] In some plainer sphere of life this would have been the first step.

such an enquiry is in itself a serious matter and denotes a warning. According to the answer, the three Cabinets must then resolve what further action is to be taken. Only a Turkish answer could furnish the starting point for further negotiations.

This, moreover was entirely Grey's first idea, as expressed in telegram Nos. 798 and 799, and then partially changed by the French proposal. Grey is now reverting to this idea, and will proceed no farther for the present. Cambon tells me he is convinced of this. France has accepted Grey's last proposal.

(796) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 27-Dec. 10, 1913. No. 1039.*

It is difficult to say what compensations could satisfy us, *for our real purpose consists explicitly in removing the German general from Constantinople and no compensation could make good the damage arising from a command in the city.*[1] In a personal conversation, the German Ambassador has expressed his opinion, that we might possibly agree to the German officer being given command over the second Division outside of Constantinople,[2] and not over the Division of the First Army Corps in Constantinople itself. *I believe, however, that this would be of no consequence to us, as the division in Constantinople would nevertheless be under the German Commander of the Army Corps. Wangenheim*[3] *emphasizes that it would be unpleasant for Germany, to remove the German Commander of an army corps from the city, whilst a British Admiral, under whose command the whole Turkish Fleet is placed, is permitted to reside in it. This, to be sure, is a difficult circumstance which might perhaps be altered, if England would agree to the British Admiral's being transfered from Constantinople to Ismid,*[4] *where the Dock is being built at present, whereby this Admiral would remain at the head of the entire Turkish fleet.*

[1] There was no question of "command in the city," so far as the nationality of the officer was concerned. Entering the service of the Ottoman government the officer was subject to Ottoman military and civil laws and exercised authority only to the extent permitted or ordered by the Turkish Ministry of War.
[2] In Thrace; headquarters at Adrianople.
[3] German ambassador at Constantinople.
[4] Very close to Constantinople; at the head of the Gulf of Ismid.

(797) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Nov. 28-Dec. 11, 1913. No. 3346.*

I refer to the telegram of our Ambassador in Constantinople No. 1039.

We share our Ambassador's opinion that England could facilitate the solution of the question, by explaining, in Berlin, that she is willing to transfer her Admiral from Constantinople to Ismid, if Germany, on her part, agrees to appoint General Sanders to Adrianople.

In this way, satisfaction would be done to Germany's *amour propre.* **I request you to discuss this question with Grey.**

(798) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 1913. No. 3349.*

Copy to Paris. Very confidential.

I hear, from a very secret source, *that Grey has explained to the French Ambassador, that he did not wish to go too far in Constantinople, as he is afraid of a change in my attitude, which might lead to a diplomatic failure.*[1] *I should like to remark, that as to the instructors, it is not a question of a change in our attitude, but of a regrettable change in England's attitude. For Grey will have nothing more to do with a note, which had been based on a telegram of Grey's to the British Ambassador.*

Should we be finally obliged to change our attitude in this question, as already in so many others, this is to be attributed only to the lack of confidence in the effectiveness of England's support, and, indeed, this confidence will only be shaken still more by such actions on the part of England.[2] *This lack of homogeneousness and solidarity between the three Powers of the Entente arouses our serious apprehension, for it constitutes an organic fault of the Triple Entente, which will always place us at a disadvantage in face of the firm block of the Triple Alliance.*

Such a condition of affairs might under certain circumstances entail grave consequences, and most seriously endangers vital interests of every Power of the Triple Entente.

[1] A case of diplomatic "trimming sails," of course.

[2] One must sympathize with M. Sazonoff, but he might have known from the very first that the British position was so utterly devoid of logic that a "tacking" by the elusive Grey was inevitable.

(799) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 1913. No. 3353.*

Since Grey has changed his point of view, and since we are obliged to bring our steps in harmony with the measure of support which we may count upon on the part of our friends and allies, we must agree to Grey's standpoint. **After you have come to an understanding with your French and English colleagues, I request you to take the step in question.**

(800) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 1913. No. 807.*

Grey did not know until now exact details of the contract of the British Admiral.[1] *He told me yesterday, that the contract had been concluded some years ago, and that it defines the position of the various British Admirals, also that of the present one. He is, indeed, the Commander of the whole fleet, but under the authority of the Secretary of the Navy; he is also a non-combatant. The position of the British Admiral really furnishes Germany with an argument which is causing difficulties here. Nicolson has spoken to me about it several times.*

(801) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Nov. 30-Dec. 13, 1913. No. 1050.*

At five o'clock this afternoon, I made the prescribed communication to the Grand Vizier. *After some hesitation, and in the obvious endeavour to represent the agreement with a German general as an internal Turkish affair,*[2] *the Grand Vizier replied that he would let me have the desired information on Monday;* **he could not give an answer any sooner, as he must first have exact information at his disposal. The French and, then, the British Ambassador called upon the Grand Vizier after me.**

(802) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 1-14, 1913. No. 813.*

Personal. Nicolson read me a long telegram, in which O'Beirne reports his conversation with you. *I believe, that this telegram has*

[1] Rather remarkable, to be sure, since in the assumed absence of the information, Admiral Limpus could have been questioned by the British ambassador in Constantinople, considering that both men belonged to the same club.

[2] At least as *internal* as the employment of Admiral Limpus.

made a very painful impression upon Grey and might discourage him in too great a degree. I asked Nicolson, for what reason Grey had changed his original standpoint. He replied, that meantime details concerning the position of the British Admiral in Constantinople had come to hand from the British Ambassador in Constantinople, which had deprived Grey of every possibility of agreeing to the draft proposed by you.[1]

(803) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 1-14, 1913. *No.* 814.

Nicolson has read me a telegram from the British Ambassador at Constantinople, on his conversation with the Grand Vizier. *The latter raises objections to our fear with regard to the sovereign rights of the Sultan, the preservation of which abide in his, the Grand Vizier's hands. He compares the position of the German general, who is placed under the Turkish Government, with the position of the Britisn Admiral.* **Finally the Grand Vizier spoke in the same sense as to Giers.**[2]

(804) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 1-14, 1913. *No.* 1054.

It is, of course, absolutely necessary for us to be prepared at all times for an armed conflict with Turkey, into which we might be drawn against our will. However, I do not deem it expedient at present to concentrate our troops along the frontier, in order to give expression to a threat, without being firmly resolved to adopt military measures, if the threat alone be insufficient. **For, in the contrary case, our prestige here would be very much shaken. On the other hand, one cannot be sure of the threat being sufficient, for the self-consciousness of the Turks has greatly increased since the settlement of the Adrianople question in their favour.**[3] *I see, however, no objection to other measures of a military character; no declarations need be made to the Turks, since these might easily assume the character of such a threat. On the other hand, I am entirely of Your Excellency's*

[1] An almost unexampled piece of diplomatic incompetence, double-dealing and foolhardiness.

[2] Russian ambassador at Constantinople.

[3] Bulgaria had been obliged, owing to the pressure of the Powers, to return Adrianople to the Turks after having reduced the fortress by an expensive siege and occupied it.

opinion, and that of the viceroy's,[1] *that it is not to our interest, to give the Armenians the impression, that we are helping them in their fight against the Turks, which would merely excite them.*[2] *For this reason, it should suffice, if we continue to transport arms across the frontier, by means of the legal institutions, and to have recourse to the administrative method only, in case the arms should be brought across in large quantities, and if this could be considered as a means of provocating Turkey. We must hereby make it clear to the leaders of the Armenian movement, that our attitude must not be so interpreted, as if we were encouraging them to a revolt, which would be very inopportune for us, and which would merely serve the Turks as a pretext to keep down the Armenians by armed force.*

(805) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 2-15, 1913. *No.* 1055.

The Grand Vizier has given me the following answer today. *General Liman has been appointed Chief of the Military Mission, Member of the War Council, with the right to one voice only, Inspector of Schools and Commander of the First Army Corps.*

The First Army Corps has been selected, because the Secretary of War intends to make it a model army corps, to which the officers of the other army corps are to be sent. Under these conditions, it will be more convenient to concentrate these school sections in the city. The Command over the Army Corps will be purely technical. The Straits, the Fortifications, and the preservation of order in the Capital, are not within the competency of the General. These, as well as the declaration of the state of siege, are directly dependent upon the Secretary of War. In the General's contract, it is not stated that in case of a state of war he will be appointed Commander of the city. Such an appointment will depend upon the Minister of War.[3]

(806) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 3-16, 1913. *No.* 818.

Nicolson spoke to me about yesterday's conversation between Grey and Lichnowsky, concerning which you will learn details

[1] Of the Caucasus.
[2] Such was Russian diplomacy.
[3] This detailed answer was given by the Grand Vizier in return to detailed questions put in the hope that a "situation," if not a "crisis," could be developed.

from O'Beirne. *Grey tried to make clear to Lichnowsky the importance of the whole affair. Since his being in office, no occurrence had made so deep an impression in Russia.* He reminded the Ambassador[1] of the important part played by Constantinople, in the relations between England and Russia, at a time when these relations were still bad. *He emphasized, how greatly England was interested in maintaining the present good relations with Russia.*[2] *As one must proceed from the standpoint, that the contract had not been concluded between the Governments of Germany and Turkey, but between the Sublime Porte*[3] *and the German general, it devolves upon the Turkish Government to furnish the necessary explanations, which one must know before one can form a judgment on the question.*

(807) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 3-16, 1913. *No.* 819.

Personal. *The general impression made by the action of the three Powers in Constantinople is so great that the position of the German Government may become difficult. This confirms my opinion, that it is necessary to transfer negotiations to Berlin. After all, everything depends on the German Government, and it seems suitable to me to let the Berlin Cabinet have as great a freedom of action as possible, which would be diminished if the Powers should exercise pressure on the Turkish Government.*[4] The explanations which Grey gave Lichnowsky, concerning the reason for our action in Constantinople, seem to me to facilitate this considerably.

(808) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram, Dec.* 4-17, 1913. *No.* 3388.

I refer to the telegram from our Ambassador at Constantinople No. 1055.

I beg you, to inform Grey of the Grand Vizier's answer, and tell him, that since we have adapted the action in Constantinople to the wishes of the British Government, we now expect the latter to take the initiative, as the answer of the Turkish Government contains nothing

[1] The German.
[2] At the expense of the Germans and Turks.
[3] Hard to understand, since the "Sublime Porte" was the Grand Vizier and the Grand Vizier, as premier, "the Turkish government" which is the "Sublime Porte."
[4] A peculiar conception of honesty, to be sure.

new. I beg you to ascertain, whether the British Government is taking any steps to come to an understanding with Germany as to the alteration of the Contracts of the British admiral and the German general.[1]

(809) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 4-17, 1913. *No.* 3404.

Your telegram 819 received. Personal.

I should like to obtain a further elucidation of your idea, as this has probably been misrepresented in consequence of its being conveyed in cipher. With regard to the proposal of transferring the negotiations to Berlin, I do not deem it possible to continue them, after all our efforts to come to a friendly understanding have remained unsuccessful. *It seems to me that the British Government might prove more successful in Berlin.*

(810) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 4-17, 1913. *No.* 821.

Your telegram No. 3338 received.

Nicolson thinks, that various points of the Turkish answer are still not clear, among them, the difference between von der Goltz and Liman and also between the position of General Liman and Admiral Limpus.[2] Nicolson deems the answer, given to the British Ambassador, to be preparatory in nature. *Here, of course, it is thought of modifying the position of the British Admiral in order to use this circumstance during the negotiations in Berlin.*[3]

(811) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 5-18, 1913. *No.* 822.

Your telegram 3404 received.

Grey and Nicolson are absent to-day. I believe, like yourself, that the British Government might have more success in Berlin. Grey has already entered into negotiations with Lichnowsky, and, doubtless, he intends to continue them, the more so, *as he alone is able to propose a modification of the British Admiral's position.* It is only a question, whether he can negotiate alone, while we stand aside. It would be best for you, to come to an agreement with

[1] Sazonoff's admission that the status of the German officer differed nowise from that of the British officer.
[2] A perfectly absurd contention.
[3] A case of Machiavelism *à outrance.*

Buchanan about this. *The latest action of the three Powers in Constantinople has made a deep impression;* a repetition in Constantinople would surely be equivalent to a coercion of the German Government which must be avoided now, at the beginning of the negotiations.

(812) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 5-18, 1913. No.* 591.

Personal. Hourly, the French Ministers, the leaders of the political parties, and the representatives of the press ask me, explicitly, what Russia intends to do further in the question of the German instructors, in as much as we are considered to be the most interested in this matter.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs assures us of his entire solidarity, and is prepared to support us energetically. *I have no reason to doubt his sincerity, but the present Cabinet is, in accordance with its nature, little disposed to an active policy, and its activity must be carefully directed and inspirited by us.* It is particularly feared, that we adopt the standpoint of compensations, as this might easily lead to the liquidation of Asiatic Turkey. On the whole, the press is favourable to us up to the present; *only certain organs, under the influence of financial groups, are opening a press campaign against us on account of the incident with the Banque Perrier and our objections to the financing of Turkey by France. The newspapers devoted to us, such as the "Matin," are demanding instructions from me, and if we are unable to indicate to them a direction they might follow a wrong course.* In consequence of this, it is most particularly important to me to be informed of your plans and intentions, as soon and as explicitly as possible.

(813) *Sazonoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, Dec. 7-20, 1913. No.* 3426.

Identical to Paris. I refer to the telegrams from our Ambassador at Constantinople Nos. 1069 and 1072. Confidential.

I request you, to inform very confidentially the British Government of the contents of these telegrams. We think, that we cannot be sure of a favourable issue of this matter, before the receipt of further statements on the part of the German Ambassador in Con-

stantinople. At all events, it is most desirable that inopportune rumours should not get into the press. *Any kind of indiscretion, such as that which has caused such great dissatisfaction in Germany, might spoil everything.*

(814) *The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 7-20, 1913. No. 1069.*

Wangenheim told me, yesterday, in strict confidence that he had enquired at Berlin last evening, whether he might make me the following proposal. But as he had not received any answer as yet, he would request me not to make any use of this communication for the present. In consequence of this, I earnestly request you to regard this telegram as strictly personal and confidential.

After consulting upon the situation that has arisen, Wangenheim and Liman have come to the conclusion, that there is no necessity for the General to command the Army Corps, if there are only a sufficient number of troops to give the military schools an opportunity for practical exercises; a German general would command the army corps in Adrianople.

The technical details of a compromise of this sort could be arranged by the Russian military agent in conjunction with his German colleague, or with General Liman's Chief of Staff.

Wangenheim merely requests that a certain time be left him—about a month—so that public opinion in Germany, and in Turkey, does not receive the impression that Germany was forced to yield to us. *He asserts, moreover, that he had twice proposed such a compromise to the Turks, but he had met a refusal on their part, and a certain time must elapse, before he would succeed in bringing them to a different frame of mind.* I replied to the German Ambassador, that one must attempt to come to a solution as quickly as possible, as, otherwise, the excitement of public opinion might increase still further, and lead to new complications. *I do not believe what the Ambassador says regarding the twofold refusal of the Turks. Personally, I consider the solution proposed as acceptable, if the number of troops placed at the disposal of Liman will be limited as much as possible.* Should Wangenheim be empowered to make a proposal of this sort, I would deem it desirable that our press should refrain from all too violent attacks upon Germany during the negotiations.

(815) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec. 7-20, 1913. No. 1072.*

Wangenheim called on me yesterday, and informed me that he had received no answer from his Government, but that he considered himself authorized to speak in the sense of his declarations of yesterday, the more so since the intentions of the Berlin Cabinet were well known to him, the latter wishing to clear the misunderstandings which had arisen between Russia and Germany. He read me the two telegrams which he had sent to Berlin. In the first telegram he reports that after his arrival, *Liman declared to the Turkish Minister of War that, should his command of the First Army Corps provoke difficulties for Turkey, he would be agreeable to having a German officer command the Army Corps of Adrianople.* Izzet Pasha promised to give an answer.

In the second telegram, Wangenheim reports that Liman, for the second time, addressed a similar question to the Minister of War, whereby he merely imposed the condition, that he must be given a sufficient number of troops of the line in Constantinople, *in order to arrange practical exercises for the cadets of the military schools and the young officers of the General Staff. Izzet Pasha declined this, and declared that he would prefer that Liman should retain the command of the First Army Corps, as this had been stipulated in the contract signed by him.* Wangenheim requests his Government to authorize him to declare to me that he, and Liman, are doing everything possible to induce the Turkish Minister of War to accept Liman's proposal, but that time will be necessary for this. I assume that the Turks, when they see that an agreement has been effected between ourselves and the Germans, will no longer persist in their refusal. In the meantime, they will most likely merely attempt to exploit the misunderstanding between us and Germany.

(816) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec. 7-20, 1913. No. 1073.*

I learn from a private, but reliable, source *that the German Ambassador has just received news from Berlin to the effect that Emperor William has approved of his proposal and authorized him to discuss matters with me in this sense, and to come to an agreement.* Wangenheim will very likely communicate the contents of the telegram to me. I urgently request you to let me have instructions.

(817) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Dec.* 8-21, 1913. *No.* 3436.

We consider it practicable, that our Military Agent[1] should get in touch with the German Military Agent,[2] in order to work out a form of agreement. Should the simple activity of the instructors not suffice, we would be agreeable to having a German officer command an army corps in Adrianople. We do not understand, why the German general should find it necessary to command a certain number of troops of the line in Constantinople. It seems to us, that the cadets of the military schools, as well as the officers of the General Staff, could travel to Adrianople for camp exercises.[3] We, nevertheless, leave it to you, in conjunction with the Military Agent, to attain acceptable conditions on the spot.

(818) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 16-29, 1913. *No.* 833.

Grey will not return to London before January 5, so I spoke today with Crowe. Goschen telegraphed on December 27, that he had had a conversation with Jagow,[4] at which the latter expressed the hope that it would be possible to come to a compromise, though this would be attended by considerable difficulties. He added, that he was expecting the arrival of Wangenheim in order to discuss the matter more in detail with him. Crowe believes that one must, at all events, wait for the results of this conversation, before taking further steps at Berlin. As to further steps at Constantinople, Crowe is of opinion that Grey will consider it necessary first to clear up the following points:

1.) Of what will our minimum demands consist—alteration of the German-Turkish Contract or compensation?

2.) *What coercive measures have we in view should Turkey not accept our demands?*

3.) *To what extreme measures are we prepared to resort, should Turkey stubbornly refuse, and should she be supported by Germany?*

Crowe communicated this to me quite personally. *Grey might not have expressed himself so clearly, but it is probable that Crowe's words are in accordance with Grey's real opinion.*

[1] and [2] Attachés.
[3] Quite impracticable—eight hours' trip by rail.
[4] German secretary of state for foreign affairs.

(819) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 17-30, 1913. No. 607.*

Urgent. I communicated the contents of your telegram to the Minister of Foreign Affairs last evening, and in order to avoid all misunderstanding gave him the substance of Giers' telegrams. Today, the Minister gave me the following written answer:

"The Minister of Foreign Affairs has given his most attentive consideration to the note of the Russian Ambassador under date of December 29.

"M. Doumergue assures M. Iswolsky, that the Government of the Republic is firmly determined to join in all actions which the Russian Government has undertaken at Constantinople in connection with the Mission of the German General Sanders.[1]

"It appears to the French Government that at the moment the situation is as follows:

"From the note mentioned in the foregoing, it appears that the German Ambassador at Constantinople is at present in Berlin, *in order to point out the necessity of yielding to the justifiable demands of the Russian Government, and of Russian public opinion.* On the other hand, it appears from a telegram which was received yesterday evening by the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg, that M. Sazonoff has requested certain explanations from the German Government.

"Is the Russian Government not of the opinion that it would be more expedient to wait until a further estimate of the situation would be possible on the basis of the explanations obtained in this manner? Does it not fear that an immediate intervention of the Entente Powers might, in spite of its friendly character, harm the direct exchange of opinion which is at this moment taking place between St. Petersburg and Berlin? The French Government is, nevertheless, prepared even now, to consider, in conjunction with the Russian Government, the diplomatic steps, upon which the Entente Powers must ultimately decide, in order to carry their point at Berlin or at Constantinople.

"In consequence of this, the Minister of Foreign Affairs begs the Russian Ambassador, to communicate to him the opinion of the Russian Government, as to the intervention in question, the claims to which

[1] Caring little, seemingly, about the facts in this tragic *opera-bouffe*.

the three Powers are to refer, and finally, the decisions which Russia believes she must propose to the French and British Governments, in case their common action at Berlin, and at Constantinople, should not have found the peaceful solution which they seek."

(820) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 17-30, 1913. *No.* 608.

Urgent. Continuation of my telegram No. 607.

Doumergue gave his answer, after he had discussed the situation with the two brothers Cambon [1] who are at present in Paris, and after he had received a telegram from the French Chargé d'Affaires in London, as to his conversation with Crowe. I was able to conclude, from my personal conversations with Doumergue, that one fears here, that an enquiry in Berlin, on the part of the three Entente Powers, even though this should be put in a wholly friendly form, might intensify the situation still more, and that, in particular, the participation of France in such a step might hurt the *amour propre* of Germany. With regard to Delcassé's telegram, that our Ambassador at Berlin had been instructed to take up negotiations with Jagow again, the opinion prevails here, as well as in London, that one must await the result of this exchange of opinion, and of Wangenheim's report, after his arrival in Berlin. *Doumergue lays special stress upon the necessity of St. Petersburg, Paris and London coming to an understanding, as to all possible consequences, and of discussing the measures which one must take, in case the action at Berlin and Constantinople should lead to no result.*

(821) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 17-30, 1913. *No.* 308.

I received a visit today from Wangenheim, who is here on leave of absence; in friendly intercourse we discussed the possibility of a way out of the present difficult situation in connection with the Military Mission. The German Ambassador, whom I found peace-loving and conciliatory, told me that the Berlin Cabinet sincerely desired to come to an acceptable compromise with us, and was seeking a suitable means to this end.

He himself, Wangenheim, is always prepared to work in this sense in Constantinople. *Russia, however, must facilitate Germany's*

[1] Paul and Jules—French ambassadors at London and Paris, respectively.

task by not presenting an ultimatum to her, nor demanding the fixing of any kind of time-limit. In Wangenheim's opinion, it is, furthermore, necessary not to bring the question of Liman's command in any relation to the position of the British admiral, since such a treatment of the matter, as well as every form of pressure upon the Berlin Cabinet, would not only not facilitate a solution of the question in a sense favourable to Russia, but would, on the contrary, render it most difficult, because in this case, the German Press would raise too loud an outcry, and would demand that Germany do not yield in any way whatsoever, and the whole of Germany would stand behind the press.[1] **The situation which would then arise Wangenheim even compared with the candidacy of the Hohenzollern in the 70's. Hereupon, I replied, that the Berlin Cabinet, must, nevertheless, do something to calm public opinion in our country, with which he expressed himself as entirely in agreement. He promised to propose a formula in order to achieve the result desired by us.**

(822) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 18-31, 1913. *No.* 837.

Your telegram 3489 received.

Grey has by no means the intention of breaking off negotiations with Berlin, and instructed Goschen only yesterday, to insist upon the necessity of "coming to an understanding in order to avoid serious complications, since this question possessed a most particular significance chiefly for Russia." [2]

(823) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 18-31, 1913. *No.* 838.

Continuation of my telegram 833. Grey confirms the contents of my telegram, mentioned in the foregoing, in a letter directed to Crowe.

(824) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Letter, Dec.* 19, 1913-*Jan.* 1, 1914.

Now, that the new French Ministry has been in power for several weeks, one may with considerable certainty conclude that the Doumergue-Caillaux Cabinet, harmful as it may be from the stand-

[1] A most remarkable concession.
[2] Which seemed no longer concerned in the status of Admiral Limpus.

point of French domestic policy, *deserves no reproach in so far as our direct interests come into question.* The Cabinet met us more than half-way in the railway question, which requires some courage, since it was precisely on this question, that the opposition had attacked it from the beginning. In the matter of the Turkish Treasury Certificates, the former Government was to blame, in that it did not pay attention to the operations of the Banque Perrier in time: in this connection, the press brings charges against the French Embassy in Constantinople. One assures me, however, that Bompard had reported upon this in good time, but that this report was intentionally mislaid by M. Hou, before the ministerial crisis,—M. Hou being known to you since the session of the International Finance Commission. As to Caillaux,—he has displayed in this matter an energy which, to be sure, is tardy, but, nevertheless, unusual here.

Nor can I complain as yet regarding Doumergue's attitude towards the most important question—that which concerns the German officers at Constantinople; he assures us, in apparently the most sincere manner, of his full support. *For all that, I foresee that in this question, we shall have to reckon, not only with his inexperience, and lack of diplomatic training, but also with the fear which the present ministry has of complications.* In all my dealings with Doumergue, I have recourse, in order to obviate misunderstandings and inaccuracies, to writing; *I never receive an answer until this has been discussed in the Ministerial Council, and, in the majority of cases, first communicated to London.*[1] All this impedes the negotiations. Apart from this, subordinate offices of the Ministry in this manner have decisive significance, *and these carry on their own policies, which are frequently hostile to us. Finally, from personalities such as Doumergue and Caillaux, one can expect the preservation of diplomatic secrecy still less than from their predecessors.*

As I telegraphed you, Doumergue expressly asked me, what measures of coercion we intend to propose, should the negotiations at Berlin and Constantinople not lead to any result. In connection with this, I wish to report to you an interesting conversation with Paléologue. *Bompard,*[2] *who is at present in Paris, told him, as his*

[1] Showing where the policies of the *entente cordiale* were being reviewed, if not shaped.

[2] French ambassador at Constantinople.

own personal opinion, that, should we not achieve our aim by peaceful means, we should ask the Sultan for a firman *for the passage of one of the cruisers of our Black Sea Fleet through the Straits, then, dispatch this to the Bosphorus, and declare that our warship will not be withdrawn, until the contract with General Liman and his officers has been altered.*[1]

In answer to my question, as to whether I might communicate this to St. Petersburg, Paléologue replied that he had nothing against this, but that it naturally referred only to a personal opinion of Bompard, and that *the initiative for such a step should not be ascribed to France. On my remarking, that the Sultan was not likely to grant a* firman *of this kind, Paléologue replied that the Russian war vessel could also enter the Bosphorus without this, and that the Turkish batteries would scarcely dare to open fire.*

I will express no opinion, as to how far we might consider such a point of view, but it seems to me significant, *that in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here, one should contemplate the possibility of such an acute turn of affairs.* I would also add, that in the event of our resolving upon an energetic action of this sort, public opinion in France would take our part, *since it is susceptible to everything which touches national dignity, and feels most keenly the inadmissibility of German influence in Turkey.*

(825) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 19, 1913-*Jan.* 1, 1914. *No.* 311.

I saw Wangenheim a second time, and had a long conversation with him. He is leaving to-morrow for a two weeks' stay in London. It is not likely, that I shall have the possibility of discussing with Jagow my conversations with Wangenheim, since the Minister of Foreign Affairs [2] makes no decisions independent of the orders of the Emperor. Nor has he seen the Emperor, as he declares, since his return from leave of absence.

The Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs [3] told me, as did the Chancellor, during the New Year's reception, that he foresaw the

[1] The "firman" was to be sought on the basis of having the warship go "through the Straits" and then it was to stay in the Bosphorus. Rather desperate and a trifle dishonest.

[2] and [3] The same official; No. 3 is the correct title.

possibility of arriving at a satisfactory solution with us. Jagow did not touch upon any other political question. I arranged to meet him to-morrow, before the departure of the Courier.

(826) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Telegram, Dec. 20, 1913-Jan. 2, 1914. No. 3513.*

We must needs call the attention of the French Government to the fact, that France, periodically, gives financial support to Turkey, either in the form of advance payments of private banks, or as loans which are granted to her through the agency of the French delegate. *Such a procedure is at present in no sense justified by the plea that Turkey must be saved from bankruptcy, for the Sublime Porte has just bought an armoured cruiser in England, which might, in the present political situation, not only react upon the question relating to the islands, but also upon those coercive measures which we must eventually apply, if the negotiations at Berlin should remain without result. I request you, to seize a favourable opportunity, to indicate to the French Ministers, without unnecessarily exciting them, that the Sublime Porte must be granted no financial assistance at present, in order not further to reinforce the Turks in their obduracy.*

(827) *Sazonoff to the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London. Telegram, Dec. 22, 1913-Jan. 4, 1914. No. 3541.*

I assume that Wangenheim's journey to London is in connection with the question of the German Military Mission in Constantinople. *The German Ambassador is probably pursuing the object of estranging England and Russia in this question. Please, direct Grey's serious attention to this, and make clear to him, how harmful an influence such efforts of German diplomacy might exercise upon the balance of power in Europe.*[1]

(828) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 23, 1913-Jan. 5, 1914. No. 840.*

After Tyrell had put himself in communication with Vere, Armstrong's[2] representative, he informs me, that the Dreadnought

[1] None whatever, unless Sazonoff had made up his mind to quit the entente with Great Britain—what this intimation amounts to, of course. It is remarkable on how little this "Balance of Power" did hinge.

[2] The firm that was building the "Rio" for the Chilean Government.

"Rio" will not be completed for delivery to Turkey before the late autumn. *He denies, in the most decisive manner, Turkey's intention of purchasing an armoured cruiser from the Chilean Government.*

(829) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 23, 1913-*Jan.* 5, 1914. *No.* 841.

Your telegram No. 3541 received.

Crowe has no knowledge as to Wangenheim's intention to visit London. *I, nevertheless, expressed to him the hope, that if he should really arrive, the impression which had been circulated by the press—as if a complete understanding did not exist between Russia, France and England,—should not be accentuated.* Crowe will speak to Grey in regard to this, since Grey will pass through London to-morrow. In his opinion, a visit by Wangenheim would be an act of tactlessness towards Lichnowsky,[1] and, he does not believe that this will take place. At all events, it would lead to no result, neither with reference to England's relations with Germany, nor with a view to a possible effect upon public opinion in Europe.

Crowe has informed me of the contents of a telegram received from Goschen,[2] according to which General Liman has the intention of giving up the command of the First Army Corps, on the pretext that this unit is not in accordance with his high personal rank. He would then assume the same position as was formerly occupied by von der Goltz Pasha.

Goschen expresses the hope that we will refrain from exerting any pressure upon the sensitive German Government, until one is able to see to what results the present negotiations, which are to establish a suitable formula, will have led.

(830) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 23, 1913-*Jan.* 5, 1914. *No.* 843.

Continuation of my telegram No. 841.

Late last evening, Crowe telephoned me that it had been ascertained, *that the British Ambassador at Constantinople had sent a private telegram to Tyrell, within the last few days, to inform him that Wangenheim was travelling to Ireland to buy horses for himself, and*

[1] German ambassador at London.
[2] British ambassador at Berlin.

that he had requested him to give him letters of introduction to persons who have experience with horses. Crowe adds that the journey is of a purely private nature.[1] **Nicolson returns on Thursday; I will speak with him concerning this.**

(831) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec. 23, 1913-Jan. 5, 1914. No. 617.*

In a long conversation, in connection with the mission of Liman von Sanders, the President of the Republic[2] **told me, that Cambon, after his return to Berlin,** *had had a very friendly interview with Jagow, who told him, that he frankly desired to do away with the incident, but if the matter were to be given a "European character," then Germany would not be in a position to adopt a yielding attitude. Jagow also spoke to the British Ambassador in a similar sense.*

From this Poincaré draws the conclusion that every step made in common by Russia, France and England would meet with strong resistance in Berlin, and render the situation considerably more acute; should we, nevertheless, consider it necessary to undertake such a step in common, France would naturally join us, but in this case one must foresee the further progress of events and come to an understanding as to further actions in common.[3] **In this connection, Poincaré, in the most decisive terms, confirmed Doumergue's declaration as contained in my telegram No. 607,** *namely that France is firmly determined to act with us in this connection. From Poincaré's words, I have been able to conclude, that the expressions, of the reply mentioned, have been most carefully weighed by him, and by his Ministers and that, in spite of France's love of peace, these words express, with full and deliberate intent, a quiet resolution not to withdraw, under the prevailing circumstances, from those obligations imposed upon her by her alliance with us.*[4]

In view of this fact, a most particularly unpleasant impression is called forth here by some of our newspapers, accusing France of passivity in the question of the German military mission.

[1] A false alarm, therefore.
[2] M. Poincaré—the man whom Sazonoff wanted in office when the crisis came.
[3] War!—the *ultima ratio* of kings and such.
[4] The reader is requested to make a review of how this situation was started and promoted. Meanwhile, the status of Admiral Limpus remained the same.

(832) *The Russian Chargé d'Affaires at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Dec.* 25, 1913-*Jan.* 7, 1914. *No.* 847.

Grey has received a telegram from Buchanan, containing a report of his conversation with you. *It was with pleasure, that the Minister heard of your decision to postpone, for a week, the project of a formal action of the three Entente Powers in Berlin. Grey has postponed his departure for a day, in order once more to be able to talk things over earnestly with Lichnowsky, and to call his attention to the dangerous consequences that must ensue, if no understanding be achieved. In particular, he will point out that the basis for such an agreement must be established, as soon as possible, in order to calm public opinion.*[1]

Since the rumour, that this whole question had been discussed by Emperor William in Berlin last May crops up more and more persistently, *Grey has begged the King to inform him, whether there be any basis for this rumour, which he personally doubted, since His Majesty had never mentioned such a conversation with Emperor William.* **Grey hopes, that the German General Staff will convince itself of the necessity of coming to an agreement with Russia. As to a financial pressure being exerted upon Turkey, he doubted whether a measure of that sort could be put into practical effect by France,** *since this would injure the great numbers of French owners of Turkish securities.*

As to Wangenheim's journey to Ireland, he had heard of this only through Buchanan and me, and he does not even believe that the Ambassador will express a desire to speak with him. Lichnowsky, likewise, knew nothing in regard to this visit.

(833) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 26, 1913-*Jan.* 8, 1914. *No.* 849.

Continuation of my telegram No. 847.

In my telegram of yesterday, I made no mention of Grey's remark that he had formerly been prepared to direct a joint enquiry to the Sublime Porte, for the reason that he was then convinced that Liman von Sanders, in his capacity as Commander of the Garrison of Constantinople, also united in his hands the defense of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. **In his opinion, however, the entire situation had un-**

[1] Inflamed by the chauvinist and Jingo press.

dergone a change as soon as it became known that the Straits did not lie within the competency of the German officers.[1]

(834) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, Dec.* 30, 1913-*Jan.* 12, 1914. *No.* 850.

The Agency telegrams report that General Liman is resigning the command of the First Army Corps, and will merely remain Inspector of the Army and Director of the Military School. The British Ambassador telegraphs to this effect from Constantinople. I observe, from Nicolson's words, that one hopes here, that we will content ourselves with this concession which, at any rate, signifies a moral satisfaction for us.

(835) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople. Telegram, Dec.* 31, 1913-*Jan.* 13, 1914. *No.* 3582.

I beg you to inform me, whether we understand you aright, namely, that the appointment of the German General, as the Inspector of the Army actually signifies that he will become Chief Instructor, and that, for this reason, this appears acceptable to you, whereas his appointment as Inspector of the First Military District would practically place in his hands the command of the Constantinople troops, and therefore appears unacceptable to you?

(836) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Sazonoff. Confidential Letter, Jan.* 3-16, 1914.

As you may have already seen from my last telegram, the question of the German Military Mission is about to be solved, and if the rumour mentioned by the evening papers be correct: that General Sanders has been appointed a Turkish Field Marshall and Inspector General of the Turkish Army, his relinquishment of the command of the First Army Corps is already an accomplished fact. *The point at issue will now be, to ascertain, whether we are to content ourselves with this concession.*

I asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the division stationed at Scutari [2] was commanded by a Turkish General, and upon Jagow's remarking, that he had not occupied himself with

[1] Being still the sphere of almost absolute control of Admiral Limpus and his staff of British officers, which Grey must have known all the time.

[2] A quarter of Constantinople on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus.

this question, *which would, moreover, signify a new demand on the part of Russia, I replied, that I had already directed his attention, previously, to the impossibility of leaving the command of so important a section of an army corps as a division, to a German officer, and that I was surely not in error in saying, that this was also the opinion of the Russian Government. The Secretary of State replied, with some animation, that, after the Berlin Cabinet had so plainly shown that it wishes to meet the Russian demands, and after it had removed all the difficulties that stood opposed to it, he, Jagow, was not in a position to make any addition to the important concessions already made. Furthermore, nothing was known to him as to the division at Scutari.*

It is possible, that in conjunction with the appointment of a Turkish Corps Commandant, the division mentioned will also be commanded by a Turkish officer. *Perhaps, however, the German Government does not at once wish to yield to us in this question, after having already given us satisfaction in the question of the Corps Command. In any case, we shall hardly succeed in attaining more here in Berlin, and should the Russian Government, nevertheless, insist upon removing the German Divisional Commander, then I must repeat my opinion, that we must, for the time being, content ourselves with the yielding attitude displayed in Berlin, and might later on attempt to achieve our aims in Constantinople.*

I must needs declare that the Berlin Cabinet has actually done everything in its power in order to fulfil our justifiable wishes,[1] *and this has not been easy for it, in view of the newspaper campaign directed against the Government.* The appointment of General Sanders, as a General of Cavalry is, as I was told by the Secretary of State, a quite unusual occurrence, since he had no claims to an advance in rank before the expiration of a year. Jagow requested me to communicate this to you in strict confidence, as he does not wish his statements to get into the press.

One must, however, not lose sight of the fact that General Liman's relinquishment of the command of the First Army Corps is only a formal concession. The General retains his decisive influence upon the military questions of Turkey. But this was clear from the beginning,

[1] Which were hardly justified, considering that the possible control of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and the Ottoman fleet, by Admiral Limpus might have meant more to Russia the moment she fell out with Great Britain.

for according to my opinion, we have now to deal with the fact, that during von der Goltz Pasha's time, nobody in Turkey desired serious military reforms,—whereas now, after the failures of the last war, all have recognized the necessity of re-organizing the Turkish army, in order to protect Turkey in the future from further conquests and ultimate collapse.

If this, however, be the real sentiment of Turkey then, General Liman will naturally succeed, no matter what position he may occupy, in concentrating the entire military power in his hands.

On the other hand, it appears to me, that one must reckon with the unstable nature of the Turks, and their inborn hatred of Europeans. All Turkish generals and officers who are dissatisfied with the preferential position of the Germans—and their number has grown considerably since the days of Enver Pasha—will scarcely reconcile themselves to the new order of things, *and it is possible, that, in the immediate future, events will occur in Turkey, which will not only jeopardize the position of the German Military Mission, but also the existence of the Turkish Empire.*[1]

[1] Swerbeieff was either a good guesser or was well informed. For reasons indicated in the documents, the efforts of General von der Goltz Pasha and his aides had not resulted in a betterment of either tactical organization, administration or *morale* of the Ottoman army, it collapsing completely during the Balkan war. The objection of Sazonoff and the Russian people, to having the Turkish forces gain some efficiency, was based on the fear that thereby the realization of Russia's "historic mission" at the Straits would be frustrated. Liman Pasha's efforts proved of singular value, as shown by the heroic conduct of the Ottoman troops in their defense of Gallipoli, exactly two years later, to which the editor of these documents was an eye-witness for nine months as war correspondent.

XII

FURTHER ENTENTE PREPARATIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN WAR

(February—July 1914)

(837) *The Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Sazonoff. Letter, Jan.* 31-*Feb.* 13, 1914.

In my telegram No. 19, I called the attention of Your Excellency to the communication of the Russian Telegraph Agency in Berlin, *that Secretary of State von Jagow had declared in the Budget Commission that Anglo-German relations were steadily improving. In the same telegram, the declaration of the German Naval Minister, with reference to the mutual relations between the English and the German navies, was mentioned.*

As you are aware, Tirpitz remarked that the relation of the English to the German fleet, 16: 10, *as proposed by Churchill, was entirely acceptable to Germany. As to the idea of an "Exempt Year," this proposal could not be accepted. Jagow declares, that the Cabinet of St. James has for the present advanced no such propositions. I asked my English colleague, how the constantly recurring assurances of the statesmen here, to the effect, that an improvement had occurred in Anglo-German relations, were to be explained, for this, involuntarily, provoked the thought, that constant negotiations were taking place between London and Berlin, which might finally lead to a rapprochement between both countries.*

Goschen's reply was as usual, namely, that all assurances had absolutely no value, and that the exchange of opinions between Berlin and London was limited to mutual economic and railway interests in Africa.[1]

[1] Quite a remote locality and one quarter in which Russia had no "historic mission" or "diplomatic desires."

As to Churchill's proposal, to establish a relation of 16: 10, *my English colleague affirmed my assumption, that the Canadian Dreadnoughts are excluded from this proportion, something to which Germany could scarcely agree.* **As to the proposal to build no warships for a whole year, the explanations of the Secretary of State, as Goschen told me, are not in accordance with facts, for he, Goschen, has been instructed by London to sound Jagow who had, however, given him an evasive answer.** *The English Ambassador is, however, of the opinion, as he told me in strict confidence, that this idea was unreliable, and all the less acceptable to Germany, since all the workmen of the German shipbuilding-yards would in such a case be thrown out of employment, whereas the English workmen could easily be taken over by the private shipbuilding-yards, in order to build the numerous small ships which the English Fleet constantly requires. Apart from this, the British Ambassador added, it would not suffice to suspend shipbuilding in England and Germany—all other Great Powers would also have to do the same.*

My French colleague,[1] *whose opinion Goschen had asked, regarding the "Exempt Year," replied, that he could in no case approve of this idea, since all the savings, which Germany would make in consequence of the interruption of shipbuilding, would be devoted to the strengthening of the land army; and, in case of future conflicts, this would be directed chiefly against France.*[2]

Cambon is very much worried by these constant rumours of an improvement in Anglo-German relations, since he agrees, that there is a possibility of rapprochement between these two countries in the future.

Although I do not fully share these fears, I cannot free myself entirely from the thought, that Germany and England, once they have begun to regulate their economic interests in Africa, will in time, proceed to more important negotiations, which might finally lead to a certain agreement also in political questions. From here, I am able to observe the efforts of the German Government to please the British,—but, of course, I lack the possibility of judging what impression these efforts make upon leading circles in England.[3]

[1] Jules Cambon.

[2] Rather an impossible situation—*un impasse.* Thus the much advertised disarmament proposals came to nought, as reasonable people expected.

[3] They made very little impression.

(838) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Report, Feb. 27-March* 12, 1914.

....According to wholly confidential reports reaching me, the growing military strength of Russia is causing ever more serious anxiety at Berlin. *In the opinion of German Government circles, the new heavy siege artillery in Russia will be finished by* 1916, *and from that moment Russia will step into the lists as a most formidable foe, with whom Germany will have to cross arms.*

No wonder that in view of such considerations, the Germans are straining every nerve, to be ready for war with us, and no wonder that they try to intimidate us, so as to avert the suspicion that Germany is afraid of Russia. Nevertheless, it is my conviction that between all the lines printed about Russo-German relations in the German newspapers of late one may always read fear of Russia.[1] *In conclusion, let me express the hope, that they are not in error about this at Berlin, and that we are actually taking all measures for strengthening our military power—which must compel Germany to hesitate before no measures so as to bring her preparedness for war to the highest pitch.*[2]

(839) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter, March 27-April* 9, 1914.

The unfriendly attitude towards Russia, which became noticeable ever since the beginning of the Liman von Sanders episode last winter, has much improved of late. The Press has ceased its daily attacks upon Russia, although no opportunity is missed of publishing this or that fact unfavourable to Russia, mostly free inventions or serious distortions. This attitude of the German Press does not let the excitement die down. This comparative quiet, however, so I hear constantly from a reliable source, is only apparent and public opinion in Germany is still as aroused as ever against Russia, wherein the military men, and the Prussian Junkers, make no secret of their warlike mood. *This excitement and warlike feeling is due manifestly to Germany's fear of the increase of our military and economic power. They think, that this is the most favourable moment for a conflict between Germany and her eastern neighbour, since our*

[1] Refers to the cry of the Germans: *Die russische Gefahr*—the Russian peril.
[2] Swerbeieff knowing that this would bring on the catastrophe, in either a military or an economic way—the expression is axiomatic of the policy of the Entente.

military preparations are by no means complete.[1] *That such a conflict must come sooner or later is, apparently, not doubted here.*

In South Germany, this hostility towards Russia is even more manifest, probably due to the influence of Austria. Our compatriots, who come through here, have frequently reported this feeling to me. Of course, I cannot test this personally; perhaps their tales are much exaggerated, but they must contain some kernel of truth; all the more so, since even the German Government, as I reported in my letter of Feb. 27-March 12, is much disturbed by the measures taken in Russia towards the increase of our army, and of our military preparedness. At least such is my conviction. There is no doubt, furthermore, that the renewal of our commercial treaty in 1917, which may prove less favourable to Germany, is preying upon the mind of the Berlin Cabinet, which, probably, would prefer to have the existing treaty remain in force as long as possible.

Nevertheless, I am of the opinion, in which I am confirmed by the secret informations mentioned above, that *the Berlin Cabinet does not share the views of the bellicose elements of Germany, which profess to desire an immediate armed conflict with Russia. The German Government prefers to try all peaceful means towards reconciliation before taking any decisive step.* Among these means, one of the most important, is the commercial treaty; so they are preparing here for the incidental negotiations with special energy along the lines of a carefully drafted plan.

(840) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Telegram. Jan. 30-Feb. 12, 1914. No. 252.*

Copy to Paris.

Of late, we have frequently been able to convince ourselves, that we lack an organ which would unite the views, and the common action of the Powers, an organ such as the Ambassadorial Conference in London last year. The correspondence resulting from this lack, leads to delays, which have an injurious effect on the progress of affairs. As the London Cabinet does not desire again to convene last year's Conference, we shall not further insist upon it, but Grey, perhaps, will not object to the proposal that, at least, the three Powers of the

[1] Depending entirely on the ability of the French banks to make loans to Russia.

Entente should through their representatives in London establish the community of their views. *For, while the Powers of the opposite group are acting, we are merely deliberating,*[1] *and our coherence, weak enough in itself, thereby loses still more of its force. I beg you, to speak to Grey in this sense, as soon as your French colleague receives instructions as to this matter.*

(841) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, Feb.* 5-18, 1914. *No.* 39.

Your telegram No. 252 received.

Cambon received the necessary instructions yesterday, and I informed Grey today of your proposal. I told him, that, considering the want of an adequate organ, such as last year's Ambassadorial Conference, you thought it necessary to arrange for an exchange of views, on the pending questions, in order to arrive in this way at a preliminary agreement between the three Entente-Powers. In this way the delays caused by telegraphic correspondence would be avoided, and the influence and weight of the decisions of the three Powers would be enhanced.

I instanced the case of Albania, whither the Prince of Wied was to proceed, before various important questions had been solved. *Grey replied, that in the case mentioned by me, the Triple-Alliance had the advantage of being able to act, while the Triple-Entente could only defend itself against encroachments. However, Grey raised no objection to your proposal, and told me, that he was pleased to accept it, and suggested that I should meet him to-morrow, Thursday. He has already informed Cambon of this, who has made a similar statement to him this morning.*

(842) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at Paris. Confidential Letter, March* 20-*April* 2, 1914. *No.* 23.

In your letter of March 5-18, *you mentioned the question of a closer union between Russia and England, and expressed the wish to ascertain my views upon this subject,*[2] *the more so since there was a possibility that this question would be touched upon by the leaders of French and English foreign policy during the impending visit of King George to*

[1] At least a slight exaggeration.

[2] Iswolsky's inquiry was probably the result of French reaction to Sazonoff's regret that there was "lack" of an organ facilitating intercourse of the Entente.

Paris. I therefore consider it my duty, to inform you, that a further reinforcement and development of the so-called Triple-Entente, and if possible, its transformation into a new Triple-Alliance, appears to me to be a demand of the present hour. Whilst thoroughly ensuring the international position of France, Russia and England, an alliance of this nature would, because of its lack of any thought of conquest, on the part of the powers mentioned, threaten no one, but signify the best guarantee for the preservation of the peace of Europe.[1]

Certain steps have already been undertaken by France and England with regard to working out a plan for the most uniform action possible, and for a more precise definition of mutual obligations. **Obviously, we too must work in the same direction, whereby a number of incidental questions might be joined to a whole series of subjects which are ripe for discussion,—subjects which impinge heavily upon Russian and English interests in numerous fields.**

As you are aware, the inner situation of England is at present such, that it wholly absorbs the attention of the Royal Government and of the public.[2] *Under these circumstances, the soil for international agreements, concerning which the English, in accordance with their nature, are so sensitive, is most unfavourable, and we must, therefore,* **nolens volens,** *pursue this object with the greatest caution.*

In spite of this, I share your opinion that it would not prove inexpedient if Poincaré and Doumergue,[3] *on the occasion of the meeting with King George and his Minister,*[4] *would in confidence indicate to them, that a closer agreement between Russia and England would also be hailed in France as an auspicious event, which would prove equally desirable to all three partners in the Triple-Entente.* **The establishing of the conditions, upon which a political convention of this sort might be concluded, would, naturally, have to be the subject of direct negotiations between St. Petersburg and London;** *but it is possible, that the French Government would consider it useful, to propose to Grey to communicate to us in common the contents of the political convention, which you speak of as having been concluded be-*

[1] Would have done that by stabilizing international relations. At the same time Sazonoff's solicitude for the peace of Europe could not be taken seriously—it had its *arrière pensée.*

[2] Disturbances in Ireland and Labor questions.

[3] French minister of foreign affairs.

[4] Sir Edward Grey.

tween England and France.[1] This might then serve as a basis for working out a similar convention between Russia and England.

(843) *The Russian Ambassador at Paris to Sazonoff Letter, March 27-April 9,* 1914.

After the receipt of your letter of March 20-April 2, No. 23, I made use of the first opportunity, once more to engage Doumergue in conversation in regard to the question of a closer understanding between Russia and England, *Doumergue confirmed to me in the most decisive manner his intention of speaking to Grey, during the impending meeting, to the effect, that an agreement of this nature was highly desirable. He believes, that it will prove very easy, to bring forth convincing arguments in favour of this thought, because it is most obvious that, inasmuch as France has special military and naval understandings with Russia and England, this system must be co-ordinated and complemented by corresponding understandings between Russia and England. Doumergue believes, that the Russo-English agreement would have to be in the form of a naval convention, and that this would render necessary technical consultations between the three Staffs of Admiralty.*[2]

With regard to the political compact between England and France, which is to be communicated to us after consultation with Grey, Doumergue assured me that France and England were not bound by positive political obligations, but that, should the course of events lead to common action on the part of both Powers, they would adhere to the technical arrangements worked out by the General Staffs.[3] *Doumergue added, that he did not remember, whether the foregoing was expressed in a definite formula, but he promised to look up the documents in the archives of the Ministry, and to bear in mind the wishes which we have expressed.*

Up to the present, I have not had the possibility of renewing my conversation with Poincaré upon this subject; he is still at Eze.

[1] The British government has consistently denied that there was a political convention, or treaty.

[2] Russian, French and British.

[3] Quite the worst form of "alliance" there is. because it conveys no warning to the adversary and leaves the *casus foederis* determinable by circumstances the political opponent can not define to himself, as he can easily do in case of "defensive" alliances.

But I shall make an effort to see him at once, after his return, and to discuss with him the contents of your letter.

(844) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, April 29-May 12, 1914.*

Sir Edward Grey requested me to call upon him, and, upon receiving me, told me, that, since his return from Paris, he had had no other opportunity of seeing me, save in the presence of the French Ambassador, which had not permitted him to describe to me, in a veritable manner, how profound had been the impression which he had received on his visit. He told me, that he did not think he was merely giving his own personal impressions, but also those of the King, and of all those who had taken part in the visit.

Grey told me, that these impressions had exceeded his expectations by far, and that he could not sufficiently congratulate himself upon the reception by the President of the Republic and by Doumergue, with whom a perfect understanding had been achieved regarding all current questions and the general political situation: [1] that, in addition to this, the reception accorded Their Majesties on all occasions, and wherever they appeared, bore the stamp of sincere sympathy. From this, the British Government had drawn the conclusion, that the fundamental idea of the Entente had taken root as deeply in France as in England, and that in consequence of this, it rested upon a particularly firm and enduring basis.

On this occasion, Grey spoke with a warmth, which is not usual with him, and which proved that he made his deductions from firmly-grounded judgment. The intention by which he was governed in asking me to come and see him, in order to make such a communication to me, is entirely clear. He wished to announce to me the beginning of a phase of a still closer rapprochement to France. This intention became still more obvious to me upon his remarking to me, without any preliminaries, that I was doubtlessly informed about the conversation which he had had with Doumergue on the subject of Russia. He told me that it had been impossible for him in Paris, being at a distance from his colleagues, to do more than express his personal assent to the plan, according to which the Governments of England and France were to

[1] It so happened that just then there was no "crisis" of any sort in Europe; shortly afterwards, Poincaré went to Russia.

inform the Russian Government of all military conventions existing between England and France.[1]

He was able to inform me to-day that he had spoken of this to the Prime Minister, immediately upon his return to London; the latter shared his opinion, and had no objections to make against the plan proposed; the whole affair was, however, essentially of such importance that it could not be decided upon without the assent of the Cabinet-Council.

Grey told me, that to his great regret, it had not been possible for him to convene the Cabinet for this purpose during this first week; the Ulster Question and the Budget demanded the entire attention of the Ministers.

I said only a few words in reply. I thanked Sir Edward Grey for his communication, and told him that I knew how to appreciate its significance to its full extent.[2] *I summed up the situation to the effect that, if the two governments should communicate to us their military conventions,*[3] *the Russian Government would reserve the privilege of making a corresponding proposal upon an analogous basis to the British Government. I told him that I assumed he knew the views Your Excellency entertained, regarding the necessity of a still closer union between the Triple Entente, according to which even an alliance after the pattern of the three other Powers was not excluded.*

Sir Edward replied that he did not consider an alliance as possible. I returned, that I personally also conceded the difficulties of such an alliance. He added:

"As you see, we have no alliance to-day even with France.[4]

[1] The Russian government had desired that on former occasions—without success, however.

[2] Benckendorff realized that a naval or military convention with Great Britain, or both of these, would have far-reaching effects upon the international situation. Besides, the making of such agreements would have been a most satisfactory culmination of his own efforts. We find, then, that this sane man loses his balance a little in gladsome anticipation of the promised state of affairs whenever he writes of it.

[3] Going a step further, Benckendorff wanted not only a *Naval* but also a *Military* convention.

[4] French and Russian statesmen had failed to realize that British imperialism was too large an institution to be tied down by definite agreements; that, indeed, there were too many hostile points of contact between Great Britain, France and Russia to make an alliance of definite terms possible, as in Persia, China, Turkey, the Balkans and North Africa. A definite alliance between Russia and France was possible because of their common aversion to Germany, an almost total absence of colliding colonial interests and the necessity, of Russia to find capital, and of France to find profitable investments. None of these factors were evident in Anglo-Russian relations.

(845) *The Same to the Same. Letter, May* 3-16, 1914.

The French Ambassador informs me, that Grey last evening gave him to understand, that he had submitted to the ministerial Council the answer which he had given M. Doumergue in Paris in his own name, after the French Minister had made clear to him the expediency of informing the Russian Government of the correspondence which had taken place between the French and the English Governments, *in order that the St. Petersburg Cabinet might begin negotiations, to conclude an agreement on the same basis, regarding the eventual co-operation of the Russian and English navies. Sir Edward had remarked in addition, that the Ministerial Council had approved of this answer. He*[1] *reserved the right of informing me of this; but as the proposal had originated with Doumergue, he considered it necessary first to inform him of the decision of the British Cabinet.*

According to Sir Edward's view, the course of the proceedings might be as follows:

After authorisation by his Government, Cambon would inform me of the exchange of notes, whilst at the same time, Sir Edward, on his part, would communicate the same to me, in order that I may inform the Russian Government. Just as the agreements entered into with France, provide in the event of a casus belli *first of all for the co-operation of the armies, so, according to Sir Edward Grey, the nature of things demands that the eventual agreements with Russia should relate to the navy. The negotiations would, in consequence, have to be carried on between the Russian and English staffs of Admiralty. The negotiations with France took place at the time in London, and the French military and naval attachés in London travelled to Paris, in order to obtain the instructions which occasion rendered necessary. Finally, Prince Louis of Battenberg went to Paris quite inofficially in order to co-ordinate the agreements.*[2]

Cambon was of the opinion, that after the correspondence had been communicated, it would be necessary to determine the further proceedings. He told me, that according to the opinion of Sir Edward Grey, the negotiations might be conducted precisely as in the case of France, *i. e., that our Naval Attaché in London would be*

[1] Grey.
[2] First Lord of the Admiralty, but by no means a naval expert, so that the co-ordination in question was probably of a political character.

empowered to enter into negotiations with the British Admiralty Staff, after he had been given instructions in St. Petersburg, for even repeated journeys on the part of the Naval Attaché would in no wise arouse public attention, whereas the arrival of more prominent Russian naval officers in London would surely become known and might lead to undesirable comments.[1]

(846) *The Same to the Same. Letter, May* 5-18, 1914.

Upon my return to London from Paris, Cambon informed me, that Grey had confirmed to him what he had told Poincaré and Doumergue in his own name. Grey added, that since his return the Cabinet had met daily, because of the difficulties in Ireland and the Budget, so that he had not yet found it possible to take up with his colleagues the important questions of the day, which referred to foreign affairs and the Paris conversations. He had been obliged to postpone these questions for 8 or 10 days. Grey, however, had reported to Asquith on his journey. Without binding the Cabinet to the present, *Asquith had answered that he saw no insurmountable difficulties against carrying out the plan proposed in Paris. Since then Asquith has repeated this to Cambon himself. The latter has been able to establish the fact that the Prime Minister is very favourably disposed to plans of that kind. These refer, consequently, to eventual military conventions between Russia and England analogous to those which exist between France and England. The latter would be communicated to us in confidence, whereupon the Russian Government would have to make analogous proposals to the British Government, which, according to the nature of things, would refer more to the navy than to the army.*

It is not to be assumed, that all members of the Cabinet will give their sanction to this beforehand and without opposition.[2] *Nevertheless, the firm determination of the real leaders of the Cabinet will carry the day, as I do not doubt in the least, and then the real negotiations may begin.*

After the results which have just been described will have been achieved, we, as I believe, will have attained the main object in view,

[1] And thus inform the members of the Triple Alliance.

[2] Feeling that, so long delayed, a convention with Russia had a definite object in view. The sounding of Grey by Benckendorff had been a continuous performance, so that an emergency would be detected behind Grey's willingness to approach Russia closer in a military sense.

namely, to substitute for the hitherto far too theoretical and peaceable basic idea of the Entente something more tangible. My sojourn in Paris, and the spectacle which I there witnessed, have anew substantiated my opinion, that an alliance or any other form of public agreement is impossible, and that, even if the British Government should permit itself to agree to this, the results would be quite different from those expected. **The reception which was accorded the King and the Queen was no doubt an extraordinarily hearty one, much heartier, I was told there, than was the case with former English visits.** *If, in spite of this, the impossibility of concluding a formal alliance between England and France has been recognized, then this will, in a still greater degree, be the case between Russia and England.*[1]

I doubt, whether a more powerful guarantee for common military operations could be found in the event of war,[2] *than this spirit of the Entente, as it reveals itself at present, reinforced by the existent military conventions.*

If we review the various phases of the Entente, it cannot be denied that England has never hesitated, in threatening moments, to place herself on the side of France; the same holds good for Russia on every occasion on which English and Russian interests were simultaneously affected, and this, despite the difficulty of reconciling the policies of both countries in questions that arise day after day, and despite those reasons, which it would lead too far to discuss here, but which explain clearly, why the **entente** *between Russia and England has not taken root so deeply as that between France and England.*[3]

The reason for this is to be sought in the fact, that even a most careful, but public, alliance would meet with strong and undisguised opposition in England, and that not only on the part of the Liberal Party, and that a great part of the political effect intended would be frustrated by it. I believe, that under such circumstances an alliance would not be worth much. It would merely, in a very slight degree, increase the guarantees which are offered to France and Russia by England, and it would, on

[1] Naturally. Great Britain's reasons for not making a definite alliance with France were identical to those that argued against a definite alliance with Russia. The British government was at least true with itself. Its world politics—as those of any other empire—were such that it became necessary to play all states against one another, in which none were really friends while all were potential enemies.

[2] All too true.

[3] These policies and reasons are outlined in the footnotes explaining why Great Britain was averse to "alliances."

the other hand, offer a far more fertile soil for agitation in favour of Germany, something upon which Germany places more weight than ever.[1]

To recapitulate in brief, I would like to say, that even those Englishmen, who are firmly convinced that, sooner or later, a conflict with Germany will prove inevitable, would be frightened by the idea of binding England by means of decisive treaties of alliance which would impose obligations upon her, the conditions and consequences of which cannot as yet be foreseen.

(847) *The Same to the Same. Letter, May* 10-23, 1914.

Sir Edward, yesterday, requested that Cambon and I call upon him. As my French colleague had already informed me, the Secretary of State confirmed to me the fact, that the English Ministerial Council had approved of the answer which he had given to Doumergue in Paris in his own name,[2] *after the French Minister had spoken of the relations between Russia and England, and had indicated how useful, under certain contingencies, previous military conventions between the governments would prove.*

The first step to be considered was to communicate to the Russian Government, on the part of France and England, the two confidential and secret documents, which had been exchanged between the French and British Governments in the year 1912.

Sir Edward laid special stress upon the point, that the text of these documents showed that no alliance was concluded between the two Powers. *They fulfilled the purpose rather of putting the substance of the military agreements in the proper light, agreements which had been entered into, between the army and navy authorities, for the eventuality that it should become necessary for the British and French naval and land forces to co-operate actively.*[3]

Sir Edward emphasized the fact, that, without some such previous

[1] Somewhat far-fetched. What an alliance would have done is: Germany would have known just what to expect, and it is precisely this which Grey wanted to avoid as is shown by the documents.

[2] To wit: Without the consent of the Cabinet Council.

[3] The eventuality differs from the regular *casus foederis* of defensive alliances in so far as it makes co-operation of the armed forces contingent upon the mutual selective-consent of the subscribing governments, instead of fixing the point and conditions of "operativeness" of the alliance in a definite and precise manner.

agreement, an immediate co-operation, even with the best of wills and in spite of the close political entente between both Governments, would encounter serious technical difficulties.[1]

He added, that England had no objections to an agreement, in the same spirit as expressed in the correspondence between Cambon and himself, being entered into and concluded between the Russian and the English Staffs of Admiralty. *In a convention of this kind, he saw the same practical advantages, which result from the convention with France. He told us, that he was thinking of a naval convention, because this, in view of the circumstances, was the most suitable, and because he was, moreover, disposed to believe, that this would also be in accordance with the wishes of the Imperial Government.*

Hereupon, Sir Edward Grey gave me a copy of the document, which he had handed to the French Ambassador on November 22, 1912, and Cambon on his part gave me, on the authority of his Government, a copy of the reply which he had directed to Sir Edward Grey on the following day.

In response to my question Sir Edward declared, that the most expedient thing to do would be to authorize our Naval Attaché in London, to place himself in communication with the British Staff of Admiralty. *The First Lord of Admiralty, as well as the British Ministers, were instructed as to our plan. The British Staff of Admiralty is in possession of the conventions, regarding the navy, which were worked out in common by France and England. As to the remaining agreements, France who was allied with us, might use them as she deemed necessary.*

In thanking Sir Edward for his friendly sentiments, I confined myself to remarking that I would at once transmit the copies of both documents to Your Excellency and report to you exactly what he had told me when handing the copy.

[1] Hardly the case. The British government would have either accepted, or rejected, an alliance. No technical difficulties were involved. It was all a matter of whether or not an alliance or a convention was desired and desirable. From an alliance retreat was impossible without perjury; a convention left it to the British government to recognize the "necessity" for participation. One cannot escape being struck by the fact that Russia and France in thus bowing to the whim of the British government, must have valued their ententes with Great Britain far beyond the limits ordinarily set by "national honor" and sovereignty. Grey was willing to go so far and no further, and the French and Russian governments accepted his views without so much as offering a good argument for what they really did want—treaties of alliance with Great Britain.

(848) *Letter from Sir Edward Grey to M. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador at London. Nov. 22, 1912.*[1]

"From time to time, during the course of the last few years,[2] *the experts of the French and English military and naval authorities have consulted with one another. It was constantly agreed, that such discussions were not to restrict the freedom of decision of the two governments, as to whether the one was to support the other with arms or not. We assumed in this, that such consultations by experts represented no agreement, and could not be regarded as one, whereby the one government, or the other, would be pledged to intercede in an eventuality which had not yet taken place and which might never take place. Thus, for instance, the present division of the fleets of France and England is not based upon an obligation to operate in common in the event of war.*

"You have in the meantime pointed out, that, if the one government, or the other, should have weighty reasons to fear an unprovoked attack on the part of a third power, it would be necessary to know if it might, in such a case, count upon the armed assistance of the other. I am entirely of the opinion that, if the one government, or the other, should have weighty reasons to fear an unprovoked attack on the part of a third power, or any other threatened disturbance of peace, this government ought at once to come to an understanding with the other, as to whether both governments are to proceed in common, in order to ward off the attack, and to preserve peace, and to consider what measures are to be mutually taken. If these measures comprise a military action, then, the plans of the General Staffs are to be considered at once, and it would be the duty of the governments to decide as to how far these were to be followed."

[1] This text differs slightly from the version of the letter in the British "Blue Book," due, no doubt, to subsequent editing of the "Blue Book" text.

[2] We seem to deal here with an inconsistency. The correspondence between Cambon and Grey is dated November 22 and 23, 1912, but says that "from time to time, during the course of the last few years, the experts of the French and British military and naval authorities have consulted with one another"—in other words, the convention was in existence, and very broad in scope, as will be shown further on. Since the period of this activity by French and British military and naval agents, was anterior to the exchange of the letters between Grey and Cambon, it is reasonable to assume that the Franco-Russian convention contained in its proper text certain stipulations and conditions as to the question of effectiveness of the understanding. The Russians were never informed of this, and, in their case, a writ of non-responsibility, for the benefit of the British, was exacted as the very beginning of the negotiations. In the light of these facts, the value of the Grey-Cambon letters is no great one, being simply a screen for the actual understanding that made such military and naval co-operation with France possible.

(849) *Letter from M. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador at London, to Sir Edward Grey, Nov. 23, 1912.*[1]

"You reminded me, through your letter of yesterday, the 22nd of November, that, from time to time, during the course of the last few years, the experts of the military and naval authorities of France and England have consulted with one another, that it was constantly agreed that these discussions were not to restrict the freedom of any government in deciding in the future whether it wished to grant the other armed assistance or not, that these consultations between the experts formed no obligation on either side, and were not to be regarded as any which would compel the two governments to intervene in certain eventualties, and that you have in the meantime pointed out, that, if one or the other government should have weighty reasons to fear an unprovoked attack on the part of a third power, it would be important to know whether it might count upon the armed assistance of the other.

"Your letter gives the answer to this point, and I am empowered to state, that in the event of one of the two governments having weighty grounds for fearing an attack by a third power or a disturbance of general peace, the government in question ought at once to decide in conjunction with the other, whether a procedure in common, by the two governments, would be feasible to prevent the attack or to preserve peace. In this case, the two governments would discuss the measures which were to be taken conjointly; should these measures make a military action necessary, the two governments would at once consider the plans of their General Staffs, and a decision would be made as to how far these plans were to be followed."

(850) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Confidential Letter, May 15-28, 1914. No. 47.*

The readiness of the British Government to begin, without delay,[2] *negotiations, regarding the conclusion of an agreement between Russia and England, which would concern joint operations of our naval forces in the event of a common military action, has been received on our part with a feeling of the greatest satisfaction. Quite apart from the fact,*

[1] See first footnote to preceding document.

[2] The British government was in no hurry, according to Prince Louis of Battenberg, which is to be explained largely by the fact that, the Russian fleet being a negligible quantity just then, Great Britain assumed most of the liabilities.

that such an agreement is desirable from a special military standpoint, we attach great importance to it in a general political sense.

In the conclusion of such an agreement, we see an important step towards bringing England into closer union with the Franco-Russian alliance, and an effective means of reinforcing the recognition of the common interests of England and Russia, which, we are convinced, will favourably influence all the questions which affect British and Russian interests. I have called the attention of our Ministry of the Navy, in particular of our Naval Agent in London, most specially to the great political significance of the impending negotiations which the latter will have to carry on with the English Staff of Admiralty.[1] *The proposal made by the British Government, respecting the form in which the convention is to be concluded, is recognized by us as in every way suited to the purpose,*[2] *and Captain Volkoff has been instructed to enter into negotiations with the British Government.* **The principles which are to be considered during the impending negotiations, have been the object of a consultation which took place, on May 13-26, in the office of the Chief of the Staff of Admiralty.**

For your personal information, I append a copy of the resolutions passed at this conference.

"On May 13-26, 1914, *a consultation took place in the office of the Chief of Naval Staff, for the purpose of an exchange of opinions, respecting the impending negotiations, as to a convention between Russia and England, which concerns the active co-operations of their naval fighting forces, should warlike operations, agreed upon by Russia and England, take place with the participation of France. After it had been primarily remarked how desirable such a convention would be, from a specific naval standpoint, and, above all, with regard to general political considerations, the members of the Conference, after a comprehensive examination of the question, came to the following decisions:*

"It was first of all recognized, that our naval convention with England, like the Franco-Russian naval convention, would have to bear in mind actions of our navy in conjunction with the English navy which,

[1] According to Grey, they were not to have "great political significance" and there was no mention in the Cambon letters of "active co-operation of their naval fighting forces," which term, however, Sazonoff may have considered as merely circumscribed. Be this as it may, Sazonoff evinces an eagerness hardly compatible with the dignity of the Imperial Russian Government.

[2] Showing that the Russian government was not very particular as to quality.

while constituting actions agreed upon, would, nevertheless, be separate.

"As to the strategic aims, which, from our standpoint, are to become operative in the event of a war between the Powers of the Triple-Entente and the Powers of the Triple-Alliance[1] *one must distinguish: on the one hand, between the operations in the region of the Baltic, and the North Sea; on the other hand, the Mediterranean. In both, we must seek to obtain compensation from England for diverting a part of the German fleet upon ourselves.*[2]

"In the northern theatre of war, our interests demand, that England should fetter as great a portion of the German fleet as possible in the North Sea. By this means, the vast preponderance of the German fleet over our own would be equalized, and, perhaps, permit in the most favourable circumstances, a landing in Pomerania being made. Should it be possible, to undertake this operation, its execution would be rendered extraordinarily difficult, owing to the lack of transport vessels in the Baltic. The British Government might, therefore, assist us considerably by rendering it possible that a certain number of merchant vessels should be sent to our Baltic ports, before the beginning of warlike operations, so that the lack of transport vessels might be made good in this way.[3]

"The situation in the Mediterranean also concerns our interests most essentially, since in the event of the Austro-Italian forces, in this sea, having the upper hand, an attack by the Austrian fleet in the Black Sea would be possible, which would mean a serious blow to us. It is, therefore, from our point of view, extremely important, that a safe preponderance of the fighting-forces of the Entente, over the Austro-Italian fleet in the Mediterranean, be established. Since the Austro-Italian naval forces are superior to the French, it is desirable, that England, by stationing the requisite number of vessels in the Mediterranean, secure the preponderance of the Entente Powers, at least so long as the development of our own fleet does not permit us to assume this duty. It would also be desirable, that England's consent to our ships using the English ports in the eastern Mediterranean as bases be secured, similar to what is granted to us by the French naval convention, which permits us to make use of the French ports in the western Mediterranean.

[1] A very dangerous and undiplomatic admission.
[2] The Russians wanted "compensation" even when they were the beneficiaries.
[3] This should remove all doubt as against whom the convention was directed. The *casus foederis* may have been absent, but the objective at least was plainly identified.

"Should the question of the Straits (the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles) *be discussed in connection with the situation in the Mediterranean, then political questions were not to be touched upon; but only temporary operations in the Straits, as one of our strategic measures in the event of war, were to be borne in mind.*

"In addition, the conference recognized that it was desirable, that all details of the relations, between the Russian and the British navies, in the projected naval convention, between ourselves and England, should be established. For this purpose, it will be necessary to come to an understanding as to signals and special ciphers, wireless messages, and the relations between the British and the Russian naval staffs.

"It is, moreover, necessary that information regarding the navies of other powers, as well as one's own navy, and in particular with regard to technical details, instruments and inventions, be exchanged between the two naval departments.

"In the opinion of the Conference, it would also be necessary to arrange for a periodic exchange of opinion, between the heads of the Russian and the English Admiralty staffs, according to the example of the Franco-Russian naval convention." [1]

(851) *The Russian Naval Agent in London to the Chief of the Russian Staff of Admiralty. Secret Report. May 24-June 6, 1914. No. 182.*

I have the honour of reporting to Your Excellency, regarding the purchase of the Dreadnought [2] belonging to Chile, as well as the prospective conditional agreement with England.

Before my departure from St. Petersburg, it appeared to be certain, that the Government of Chile had finally agreed to the sale, and that this might hence be concluded in the near future.

After my return here, and after a conversation with the firm of Armstrong, I have the following results to report: Although the Naval Council in Chile has approved of the sale of the two Dreadnoughts, the Government has not found it possible to confirm this

[1] A rather accurate transcript of the above document passed into the hands of the German government. The dementis of the British and Russian governments did not and naturally could not remove the deep impression made by the terms of the above communication. Despite that, Emperor William went on a trip into Scandinavian waters, even after the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand.

[2] Both, Russia and Turkey, were in the market for these ships, the population of the latter having raised the necessary funds by popular subscription.

decision, even though no final negative answer has been given on its part. *This change of front is to be attributed entirely to the Chilean Minister here.*

The latter once remarked, even before the beginning of our negotiations, that he considered it possible to sell the ships only to England. Since Armstrong is aware of this, he believes that the only means of securing us at least one ship, is to have our Ambassador request Grey to indicate to the Chilean Minister, that England would be pleased with this sale. It is still doubtful, whether Grey will determine upon such a step. Should this be the case, we might count upon being able to purchase at least one vessel, if not both. After Grey has returned to London, I shall submit these considerations to our Ambassador and request his support.

As to the prospective Naval Convention with England, I have been able to establish the following, after my conversation with the Prince of Battenberg:[1]

The British Government is in no haste, and it is the French Government which insists upon expediting this matter.[2] *The Prince intends to travel to Russia with his wife during the coming August and he is authorised to discuss this question with the Naval Minister, and with you.* Before his departure, he will ask me to see him, with regard to an exchange of opinion, in order to prepare himself for the further negotiations, which are then to take place in St. Petersburg. His Highness is quite in agreement with these negotiations.

(852) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, May 29-June* 11, 1914.

I notified Grey, yesterday, that Captain Volkoff had returned from St. Petersburg, and had been instructed to enter into negotiations with the Admiralty. *Grey replied, that he would at once acquaint the First Lord of the Admiralty of this. On this occasion, Grey remarked that certain indiscretions had regrettably been committed in this matter, and that, first German, and, then, other, newspapers had occupied themselves with this question. He regretted this the more, since*

[1] Louis, who had co-ordinated the Franco-British agreements.

[2] There was no need for haste so far as the British were concerned. The Russian fleet was a wholly negligible quantity and landing troops in Pomerania a quite impossible plan so long as the Entente fleet was not in control of the Baltic.

he will be obliged to reply to a question relative to this which will be put to him in the Commons.

I replied, that I, on my part, extremely regretted these indiscretions, which repeated themselves all too frequently; I was convinced that Your Excellency shared this point of view, and I told him, that the "Novoe Vremia" had published a dementi.[1] *Grey was not aware of this, and was very well satisfied.*[2] *He asked me to send him the text. He, then, told me in general outlines, the answer which he thought of returning in Parliament, and which would cover our negotiations, as well as those which had taken place with France.*[3] **I replied, that it seemed expedient to me to treat the matter from this point of view.**

(853) *The Same to the Same. Telegram. May* 30-*June* 12, 1914. *No.* 149.

Grey told me, that he highly appreciated your frank and friendly declarations regarding the Turkish navy. *Had the British Government believed that the development of the Turkish navy signified a danger for Russia, the British officers would not have been permitted to enter Turkish service.*[4] *Since this permission, however, has only been granted to enable the Turkish navy to defend the independence of Turkey, every deviation from this aim would meet with the disapproval of the Government. Grey added, that a refusal would have resulted in the Turkish Government turning to Germany, which would have been contrary to the interests both of Russia and England.*[5] *As to the ordering, and the sale of ships in England, the Government had no legal means at its disposal to oppose these. Nevertheless, the British Ambassador in Constantinople has been instructed to make representations to the Sub-*

[1] Showing what the value of governmental *dementis*—denials—is.
[2] The virtuous Sir Edward.
[3] Indicating to what extent the British parliament enjoyed the confidence of Grey and the government.
[4] This document shows diplomacy in its dull moments.
[5] Not a sound argument, since Great Britain and Russia succeeded in making the German military mission in Turkey almost entirely impossible. The presence in Turkey of the British naval mission was the only reason why the Turkish government was permitted to retain the services of Liman von Sanders Pasha, so that there was no danger at all that the development of the Ottoman fleet would have been left to the Germans. There were times, when Sir Edward Grey had a poor opinion of the intelligence of the Russians, and this was one of them. The astute Benckendorff had fallen under the sway of the "closer relations" promoted by the proposed naval convention, and once more lost his splendid perception and fine judgment.

lime Porte, and the British officers in Constantinople are to express themselves in the same sense, though more indirectly.

These declarations have, however, brought about the result, that without any previous notification of the British Government, and without any co-operation with the naval mission, direct contracts have been signed between the Turkish Government and English shipbuilding yards which lie quite beyond the influence of the Government. Grey is of your opinion, that complications with Greece are to be feared, if Turkey should increase her armaments; he trusts, however, that prudence will keep the upper hand in Constantinople. *Should the crisis grow acute, the Government at London is prepared to come to an understanding with us, without delay, and to confer as to the attitude which is to be adopted.*[1]

(854) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Telegram, May* 31-*June* 13, 1914. *No.* 150.

Your telegram No. 1137 received. I have repeatedly discussed this question with the Foreign Office, during the last few days. *The difficulty lies in the fact that the Chilean Minister is opposed not only to a sale to Russia, but to any sale whatsoever. Grey told me the day before yesterday, that he would make use of a favourable opportunity to prevail as much as possible on the Minister.*

(855) *The Same to the Same. Telegram, June* 12-25, 1914. *No.* 167.

Grey told me to-day, that he was greatly alarmed by the false rumours which were circulating in the German press concerning the contents of the alleged Naval Convention between England and Russia in connection with the question of the Straits; he had deemed it necessary to speak of this in confidence to Lichnowsky, who is going to Kiel, where he is to see the Emperor. Grey assured the German Ambassador, that the question of the Straits had not been discussed between England and Russia for 5 *years;*[2] *he assured him, that between England on the one hand, and France and Russia there existed neither an alliance nor a*

[1] Turkey was augmenting her naval forces, because Greece was negotiating, through a Fred J. Gauntlett, for the purchase of the U. S. battleships "Idaho" and "Mississippi," which the U. S. Congress knocked down at the bargain-counter figure of exactly $12,535,276.98.

[2] Hardly true.

Convention.[1] *He, nevertheless, told him that he did not wish in any way to conceal from him, that the intimacy between the three governments had grown so great during these last years, that they had, on all occasions, come to an understanding upon all questions, just as though they were allies. On the other hand, he affirmed, that, during the course of these years such negotiations had never assumed a character directed against Germany,*[2] *nor had they any reference to the so-called "encircling policy."* [3]

(856) *Sazonoff to the Russian Ambassador at London. Confidential Letter, June* 12-25, 1914.

Immediately before the departure of our courier I hasten to inform you, *that I had another long conversation, yesterday, with the British Ambassador, whose attention I called to the serious danger of a cooling of our relations to England on account of the Persian question. I assumed that the perturbation and excitement, which had been noticeable of late in England, were most likely to be traced back to the fact, that fears, as to the position of England in India, were once more be-*

[1] "And Brutus is an honorable man."

[2] A falsehood.

[3] In this connection, the answer given by Sir Edward Grey, to the questions put to him in the House of Commons by Mr. King, M. P., and by Sir W. Byles, M. P., in June, 1914, deserves to be cited:

"3. Mr. King asked, whether any naval agreement has been recently entered into between Russia and Great Britain; and whether any negotiations, with a view to a naval agreement, have recently taken place, or are now pending, between Russia and Great Britain?

"5. Sir William Byles asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he can make any statement with regard to an alleged new naval agreement between Great Britain and Russia; how far such agreement would affect our relations with Germany; and will he lay papers?

"Sir E. Grey:

" 'The Hon. Member for North Somerset asked a similar question last year with regard to military forces, and the Hon. Member for North Salford asked a similar question also on the same day, as he has again done today. The Prime Minister then replied, that, if war arose between European Powers, there were no unpublished agreements, which would restrict, or hamper, the freedom of the Government, or of Parliament, to decide, whether or not, Great Britain should participate in a war. That answer covers both the questions on the paper. It remains as true to-day as it was a year ago. No negotiations have since been concluded with any Power that would make the statement less true. No such negotiations are in progress, and none are likely to be entered upon, so far as I can judge. But, if any agreement were to be concluded that made it necessary to withdraw or modify the Prime Minister's statement of last year, which I have quoted, it ought, in my opinion, to be, and I suppose that it would be, laid before Parliament.' "

Another falsehood—flavored with a grain of truth.

coming manifest. Sir George Buchanan conceded that my assumption was for the greater part correct. In consequence, I once more repeated to him all the arguments which prove how unfounded all such fears are, and I even hinted that, should it be desired, we could give to the British Government, and to public opinion there, reassuring declarations in regard to this in the most decisive form.

I have for the present contented myself with these hints; yet it seems to me quite possible, that, later on, in connection with our further negotiations, we might propose to England to give her a guarantee of her Indian possessions, as effective as that, given her by Japan in 1902.

At the present time, it appears to me necessary to conclude the proposed Naval Conference as quickly as possible.[1] *It is important not to postpone the conclusion of this agreement, and His Majesty was graciously pleased, to express himself in this sense to the British Ambassador in my presence. To close, I will mention, that Sir George Buchanan was received yesterday in special audience by the Czar in order to hand him an autograph letter from King George. This letter is couched in very friendly terms, and expresses the hope of His Majesty, that the relations between Russia and England might not be troubled on account of the Persian question.*

(857) *The Russian Ambassador at London to Sazonoff. Letter, June* 19-*July* 2, 1914.

I have received your very confidential letter of June 12-25. The answer which was given to you, by Sir George Buchanan, in reply to your statement, that in England there was a revival of the old fears as to India, is undoubtedly correct; it must, however, be supplemented by a few additional words.

Inasmuch as the security of India is a consequence of the political entente between Russia and England, it follows that public opinion in England, as well as the British Government, in full confidence as to our intentions, have no fears, so long as this entente exists. Should this

[1] A rather interesting statement in the light of the "open secret" making the rounds in Europe at that time, that in the course of that summer the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria was to be put out of the way, because of his alleged anti-Slav tendencies, as he was three days after the writing of this letter. There had never been much antipathy against Austria-Hungary in England, and Sazonoff needed some assurance that he would have the support of the British government, when the work of the Crown Prince Alexander and the Serbian Narodna Odbrana should have produced the next Balkan crisis.

entente come to an end, there would be a revival of the fear in question. We have to deal therefore with an hypothesis, which, however, arises only if the entente appears to be threatened by the events in Persia. It seems to me important to lay stress upon this difference, for the fears of the English do not go further than I have just indicated.

This does not, however, preclude the possibility of finding, in connection with certain modifications of our present agreements, a formula which would give expression to the security of India in a still more direct manner; this would merely make our entente still closer.

The conversations, which I have had with Grey during the last few days, prove this in a manner which is as clear as it is convincing. *I shall do all that lies in my power to expedite the negotiations between Captain Volkoff and the British Admiralty. I see no indication, that the British Government hesitates, in any way, to carry out the plan agreed upon in Paris. I believe, on the contrary, that this question has assumed a still greater importance in the eyes of the British Government: it sees in this a practical necessity, and a natural result of the Entente. If the matter has dragged up to the present, this is to be attributed to the circumstance, of which I was, moreover, informed from the very beginning,—that the Government wishes to instruct Prince Louis of Battenberg to bring the negotiations in St. Petersburg to a close. The exact date of this quite private visit, concerning which, nothing is to penetrate into the public, has not yet been fixed. Naturally, the date of this visit depends only in a slight degree upon Prince Louis himself.*

One circumstance, which at first glance is of merely subordinate importance, but which is in reality much more important than one is disposed to assume, has up to the present adversely influenced the preparatory negotiations of Captain Volkoff. *I allude to the indiscretions which have been committed. It is true that these, having very likely been committed in Paris, cause no particular surprise. Notwithstanding, it must be remarked, that nothing has ever become known as to the Anglo-French convention.*[1]

There seems to be no doubt that this time the alarm in Berlin has been very great.[2] *Perhaps, Sir Edward Grey desires, that this should*

[1] The existence of which Grey denied in parliament.
[2] Resulting from the assassination of the Austrian heir-presumptive.

be somewhat allayed before he enters upon further negotiations. It is, indeed, true, that he would find it difficult to issue a **dementi,** *and to go on negotiating at the same time—a rôle which he would be obliged to play towards Germany, as well as towards a considerable portion of his own party, and the English Press.*

It is evident that your conversation with the British Ambassador will exercise a good influence.

(858) *The Same to the Same. Confidential Letter,* July 3-16, 1914.

I have but very little that is of interest to report to you to-day.

Grey told me yesterday, that he had received no further disquieting news from Vienna and Berlin during the last few days. *Nevertheless, he did not seem to be very reassured. He considers the outbreak of national passions as very dangerous, the more so since there are but very few elements which would be able to restrain them. He says that we can no longer count upon Germany being the peacemaker under all circumstances. Nicolson is less uneasy. His standpoint is based upon the idea, that Emperor Francis Josef could desire warlike complications this year less even, than during the preceding year, now that the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, who was to be the leader of the Party of Action, was no longer there. I have no doubt that Grey has used very plain language in Berlin and Vienna.*

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF DOCUMENTS

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(Indexed by Political Issues)

While lengthy remarks as to indices are not usual, an exception is made here for the purpose of facilitating the study of the documents. Quite complete in themselves and the last word on the subjects they deal with, the papers-of-state herein reproduced pay but little attention to conditions anterior to the affairs that are described, nor do they throw much light on the political philosophy of the men that wrote them. Yet some inkling must be had of both if the character of the correspondence herein published is to be understood in its totality.

The table appended makes it possible to locate easily every reference in the documents to the main currents that shaped the political history of Europe and Asia during the period covered. Such, however, is not the prime purpose. A division of any complex of international relations, as done in the chapters of the book, is of necessity somewhat arbitrary, because little or no attention can be paid to what may be called the background of the particular situation dealt with.

Though all care was exercised in grouping related documents, it was of course impossible to effect a satisfactory division in every instance. The elements and phases of international relations are interdependent, and diplomatists and statesmen are usually obliged to pay regard to this fact, even when occupied with new and urgent phases of affairs-of-state. In international relations, as in other departments of life, there is nothing entirely new—nothing without precedent; older conditions engender new conditions.

Dealing with vital questions, international relations of peoples and governments are an organism—a thing that grows, taking its nourishment and vitalizing irritation from the hour, as it were, but having its origin and roots in history and tradition—in the events of yesterday, be these the late wars, the more recent peace treaties, the last international crisis or the latest alliances and conventions. International relations, like any other form or expression of life, are subject to never-ceasing modification, therefore. To this is due the fact that the foreign affairs of governments manifest definite tendencies in determinable directions, the isolation and classification of which, as indicated by the documents and established by the course of events, must be undertaken before the major aspect of the case is understood.

Hostile contact in international relations is the outcome of the struggle for self-preservation, and though much effort has been made to invest this with certain superior motives—ideals—the fact remains that well defined biological laws form the real

basis of the foreign affairs of governments and peoples. The propositions placed before the governed with the label, " cause of the war " upon them, are, in the majority of cases nothing more than pretexts. In the actual cause of any war the conduct of its foreign affairs of any government is usually involved in a manner that would bring little credit to it. There is always a great deal to hide, and the result is that the pretext is resorted to, such pretext being generally a minor phase of the difficulty so groomed and enlarged that it will serve to promote a warlike spirit, and confidence in the government at the same time.

The documents deal with the struggle between Triple Alliance and Triple Entente. That struggle, it will be remembered, moved on the open stage, as it were. It had its origin in the " necessities of empire " and the more legitimate needs of states. Self-preservation was its cause and purpose. But it was plainly to be seen that the play and its by-plays had prompters—secret treaties and private understandings; unwritten policies and sequestered ambitions. We find that Russia had not only alliances and understandings, but had " historic missions, " also. Great Britain wanted to not only preserve her vast colonial realm, but wished to enlarge it, driven, subconsciously perhaps, by the law that the thing which no longer grows is dying or dead. France was in much the same position. Prevented from having producing colonies, Germany sought further means of sustenance in an empire of trade, while Austria-Hungary was constantly occupied with efforts intended to hold her remarkable conglomerate of peoples together. All these were expressions of the desire and will to live.

There were several major treaties in existence at the time the first of these documents was written. The oldest was the Triple Alliance, a treaty which bound together Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. Next in importance and in point of time was the Franco-Russian Alliance, while the entente cordiale between Great Britain and France was of more recent origin.

The Triple Alliance was to some extent the successor to the older Drei-Kaiser-Bund—League of the Three Emperors, composed of the monarchs of Russia, Germany and Austria-Hungary. The league was still in existence when the alliance was concluded, but did not survive it for long. Russia withdrew for the reason that Germany was not, and never had been a dependable ally of hers as against Great Britain, while Austria-Hungary paid little attention to the " historic mission " of Russia in the Balkans and in and near Constantinople.

For several years Russia remained unattached, having a certain guarantee in the close personal relations between Emperor William I and the Russian Czars. But it was found that this would not suffice. The personal relations of the British and German courts were the closest and best during the life of Queen Victoria. William II did many things that weaned Russia away from Germany completely—the term wean is in order, because great as the Russian state was it looked upon Germany more or less as its political impresario in the Occident proper.

The Franco-Russian Alliance came into being. The objective of this combination was not directly anti-German. The alliance was formed for the express purpose of keeping Great Britain in check. Out in Asia, Russian and British imperialism clashed, and in North Africa, from the pillars of Hercules to the banks of the Nile, French and British imperialism were constantly in hostile contact.

Such, then, was the setting of the stage.

For a good many years, the statesmen of the opposing camps did their best to arrive at accurate conclusions as to the terms of these treaties. It is characteristic of all such cases that those who feel that a treaty is directed against them imagine that there is much more in such a document than in any similar instrument they themselves have drawn. They may realize that the conditions making the casus fœderis effective must be general in order to serve their purpose, but, human nature being what it is, it is taken for granted that the offending treaty contains all sorts of special provisions aimed at the state that feels itself the objective of the agreement.

The statesmen of the Triple Alliance pondered over the possible terms of the Franco-Russian Alliance and the entente cordiale, and indulged in vain speculations as to fixed designs and special desiderata. The tendencies of governments being manifested by their conduct, there is no doubt that many of these guesses were accurate enough, but they were of no avail whatsoever for the reason that by means of them no knowledge could be gained as to what the governments of Russia and France, and later Great Britain, might do in any particular set of circumstances. The same was true in the reverse order.

The operative diplomatist overlooks too often that it is not the treaty—the scrap of paper—that counts, but that it is the condition of which the treaty or convention is an expression that determines the quality and direction of foreign policy. Treaties have value only so long as there is a necessity for the provisions they contain, and so long as this necessity finds mutual recognition by the high-contracting parties. But such necessity remains never in status quo; it is never the same from one day to another, with the result that the terms of the treaty, though definite enough on paper, are subject to interpretation in the light of altered conditions. The Franco-Russian Alliance is a striking example of this. Though directed at first entirely against Great Britain, while Germany was the traditional friend of that country, it finally operated against Germany, when Great Britain was her enemy.

In all this, the statesmen of Europe, with the possible exception of Sir Edward Grey and British leaders generally, made the mistake of looking upon alliances and conventions as dynamic factors, when, in reality, they were but a diagnosis of the needs of states at the time when the treaty was drawn. They seemed to be in ignorance of the fact that the best of treaties are but historic incidents—political landmarks. Since all history is static—dead—the language of any treaty is lifeless, no matter what its intent may be. Recording conditions and incidents of the past, a treaty is at best a guide in conduct—the evidence of a moral obligation, and as such worthless if a change in conditions necessitate different conduct or substitute new moral obligations for old ones. The conduct of Italy and the change in her obligations, as shown in the documents, offer a telling example.

To be guided by the terms of a treaty is dangerous, because, instead of occupying himself with the conditions of which the treaty is but the manifestation, the statesman keeps his eye on written terms that are static, and in this manner contributes toward the reproduction of the state of affairs out of which grew the terms of the treaty. He is then likely to make "operative," as Sir Edward Grey expressed it, what otherwise would remain a dead letter.

The statesmen of the Triple Alliance especially lived in the contemplation of such

political corpses. Their striving proceeded from them and was directed toward them. The result was that they continued swinging about dead centers. Sight was lost by them of the fact that the treaty in question did not matter, and could be rendered null and void by sufficiently modifying the conditions from which the treaty sprang.

The Great War was inevitable only because it was thought inevitable. And those who thought that it could not be avoided did the least to prevent its coming.

For instance, had Germany decided to play a rôle in naval armament subordinate to that of Great Britain, her marvelous expansion and success in the commercial field would have been overlooked for many years to come—to a period, perhaps, in which the British would not have been able to destroy her foreign market. German statesmen did not pay sufficient attention to the actual background of Great Britain's attitude in this matter until it was too late. They were wholly out of sympathy with the position of the British tax-payer, who might not go to war because he found German commercial competition irksome, but who, in self-defense, would have to go to war if to this commercial rivalry was coupled a race in naval armament. And his going to war under such conditions deserves a certain amount of sympathy. Great Britain depended, and still depends, upon two things: Her foreign and colonial markets and her fleet-of-war. The men in Berlin expected too much in their hope that Great Britain would stand idly by when both seemed threatened, as the British public viewed it.

Count Benckendorff had reason to fear that a meeting of minds between Berlin and London would be the end of the Entente. With the new orientation that would have been necessary in that case, the World War would have been indefinitely postponed, because Russia and France could not win such a war without the available and latent resources of Great Britain and her empire—her great influence in the United States included. But German statesmen remained obdurate before the many indications they had. When finally they realized that the case was desperate, the British leaders, especially Sir Edward Grey, had made up their minds to use radical means.

In Germany too much emphasis was laid upon the point of honor that seemed involved. The empire could not afford to be dictated to in any respect, it was argued. It was a sovereign right of Germany's to have as large a fleet-of-war as she could afford. In view of the fact that Germany had already the best army, it seems a little childish now that her leaders should have insisted upon having as good a fleet. Of course, theoretically these men were right, but practically they were entirely wrong. To exercise within the state an absolutism is one thing; to apply it in foreign relations is quite another. Internal conditions of any state are largely the natural development of the relations of governors to governed; of external relations that cannot be said, because in this case one's own effort impinges upon an aggregate with characteristics of its own, with the result that, generally, there is a collision. Germany found it necessary to maintain the best land forces, but was at first not willing to recognize that Great Britain, for like or similar reasons, had to protect herself by means of a navy second to none. Out of this came the Great War.

A great deal has been heard in recent years in regard to moral issues and moral obligations in international relations. Nothing can be gained by delving into matters as abstract and elastic as these. The one moral obligation that is easily recognized

is the one incumbent upon him who has the necessary power to do a thing or not to do it. He is the only one who can give the struggle for self-preservation a tinge of generosity. Though we do not generally see this set forth, it is an expression of natural law that the weaker fight his battles with any means at his disposal. The documents show that Sir Edward Grey and his government actually held the peace of Europe in their hands. They show further that Sir Edward, driven by prejudices perhaps, did little or nothing to bring Germany to a full realization of her own position and that of Europe. As a matter of fact, he misled the German government—in the hope of being able to dispose of Germany as commercial competitor and naval rival at the same time. While the " Iron Ring " about Germany was indeed of paper—a series of treaties, Sir Edward and the British government do not seem to have ever done anything that could open the eyes of the German statesmen to the fallacy they were pursuing in looking only at treaties and conventions without doing anything to influence conditions. Indeed, we find Sir Edward in a most despicable double rôle. He misled his own parliament and Berlin at the same time—ever in the hope that Germany would take the step that would lead to her destruction.

The documents show that Sir Edward shunned purposely whatever could have cleared the situation. In view of the fact that the British government refrained studiously from placing itself squarely on record under what conditions international relations could be improved, the critic will do well in not forming hasty judgments as to what the response of the German government might have been. There is no doubt that the men in Berlin were extremely " sensitive " and irritable. They had good cause for this, and while Sir Edward expected the Germans not to annoy him with their idiosyncracies, he might have taken it for granted that to the Germans he could be just as offensive. Sir Edward is shown in the documents as a most unworthy sort of person—an arrogant master of men who feared but one thing: An interpellation in the House of Commons; pilot of an empire, who cringed before the necessities of the state.

In Iswolsky and Sazonoff, and Poincaré, Grey had able lieutenants; in Benckendorff and Cambon, Imperiali, Mensdorff, Metternich and Lichnowsky obedient servants. Grey was the master of them all—simply for the reason that ethical concepts had no meaning to him. He occupied himself solely with the needs of his empire, while most of the others tinged their plans at least with some regard for their friends.

Sir Edward had his understandings, but of them only one had a paper base, so far as known, and what sort of base that was has been seen. His exchange of letters with Paul Cambon amounted to very little, when viewed in the light of the alliance-treaties. The British secretary for foreign affairs sought no casus fœderis and recognized none. To follow another policy would have meant assuming a definite obligation. It was his aim to either fashion or accept a casus belli. On the part of the British government that was a commendable saneness, but in the hands of Sir Edward this fine policy became a terrible weapon of destruction.

It must be doubted that the Powers on the Continent of Europe would have gone to war, had they been obliged to live on in the contemplation of dead political issues, as preserved in the several treaties of alliance. Static bodies do not collide without force moving them. It was necessary to upset the political equilibrium before a single

one of the treaty terms could be given life—and that was presently done under the ægis of the British government.

Sir Edward Grey and the leaders of the Liberal and Conservative parties had decided that checks should be placed upon Germany. The entente cordiale, promoted by King Edward in full understanding with the Cabinet, did not suffice British needs. Public opinion in France was apathetic toward Great Britain long after the entente had become a fact. Moreover, the understanding with France bettered but slightly the relations between Russia and Great Britain, and did not at first materially modify the position of Germany. An attack on the solidarity of the Triple Alliance had to be made in order that this be accomplished, and this we find in 1) the Franco-Italian Agreement of 1902, an incidental phase of the entente cordiale. That agreement, however, remained rather lifeless. Its terms were of a decidedly local character, and their ultimate purpose could not be realized except as an incident to a major fact in Europe's political constellation.

For an effective rapprochement with Russia a means had to be found. The Anglo-Russian Convention 2) gave both countries certain immediate advantages, but, more important than all, established the contact necessary if Great Britain was to free " the road to India " of danger and keep Russia in rein at the Turkish Straits. It was the sole basis of the Anglo-Russian entente, and developed into the principal dynamic element that brought on the Great War.

The Russo-Italian Agreement of Racconigi, 1909 (3) was the counterpart of the Franco-Italian Agreement, and the first direct attempt to make Italy even less than a " dead weight " in the Triple Alliance—an element of danger.

By now, there was close contact between London, Paris, St. Petersburg and Rome. Though relations were a little clouded at times, they remained always clear enough for the purpose in hand. The " Mechanism of the Entente, " 4) as Lord Northcliffe has so aptly described it, began to work with unerring precision. Iswolsky and Sazonoff, driven by many desires and urged on by the " historic missions" of Russia, supplied most of the motive power, as did Poincaré, and, to a lesser degree, Pichon. Grey kept the throttle in hand, and when that failed, he applied the brake in Persia. If it was not Sir Edward, the master mechanician, who checked the empire-mad, mission-ridden and impulsive Muscovite, it was Grey, the disgruntled, chagrined, disappointed and disillusioned super-man, who played on the feelings of Count Benckendorff and kept the Russian minister of foreign affairs in line. More astute than the Russians, the French statesmen confined themselves to egging on their Allies, to assist Grey later in reining them.

Naturally, some compensation had to be made to Russia. Grey adopted a convenient attitude in the Balkan Question 5) and even flirted with Pan-Slavism, which ten years before would have been the political death of any British statesman.

While Sir Edward was willing to please Russia in the Balkan, he had to draw the line at the Dardanelles and Bosphorus 6). The manner in which he did this shows Grey up as an unprincipled trickster of a particularly unlovely type, and the same must be said in regard to his attitude on 7) the Bagdad railroad question, and in 8) the Open Door issue. His stand was hardly better in 9) the Morocco imbroglio, and in 10) the Armament problem he showed his true colors. Haldane's mission to Berlin, as well as the Churchill proposals are pictured in the documents as being

without sincerity, and, as Iswolsky, then Russian ambassador at Paris remarked, these negotiations and settlements postponed merely what he thought was due—the Great War. Already in December of 1911 the former Russian minister of foreign affairs had no longer the least doubt as to that. In that respect he was a most persistent and consistent diplomatist.

We can have a new era in international relations only if a sufficient number of men and women, in all countries, will come to realize what the defects and dangers of the old system are. To see these defects in all their hideousness, it is not only necessary to read this book from cover to cover, but to study it backward, as it were. The chapters of the book tell the story from the angle of incident; the index here provided mirrors the system by bringing all documents into their proper relative position. The chronological order, moreover, renders futile all possible allegations to the effect that giving the documents in the order of incident contains elements or considerations designed to favor any particular political camp. As a matter of fact, read in the order of time, the documents gain additional force, conveying, in all its awe-inspiring totality, full knowledge of the actual cause of the Great War.

To use the list, read down, and then look to the left for the number of the page on which the document can be found. The serial numbers in the first column have no bearing upon the documents, serving entirely the convenience of the reader.

EDITOR.

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	1907												
1	February 1,	548	474		2		4			7	8	9	
2	December 19,	549	477		2		4			7			
	1908												
3	June 18,	550	478		2		4						0
4	October 9,	551	480		2		4			7			
5	November 5,	255	229	1			4	5					0
6	November 25,	552	481		2		4						0
7	December 3,	553	482		2		4	5				9	0
	1909												
8	January 28,	256	231				4	5					0
9	February 3,	554	484		2		4	5				9	0
10	February 10,	555	486				4			7			0
11	February 10,	556	487				4			7		9	0
12	February 15,	557	489		2		4	5	6				0
13	February 16,	558	489					5		7		9	0
14	February 19,	559	491		2		4	5		7		9	0
15	February 24,	258	233				4	5					
16	February 26,	276	248				4	5					0
17	February 26,	257	231				4	5					0
18	February 27,	259	233				4	5					
19	February 27,	260	234				4	5					
20	February 27,	261	235					5					
21	February 27,	262	236					5					
22	February 28,	263	236				4	5					
23	February 28,	264	236				4	5					
24	March 2,	267	241				4	5					
25	March 2,	265	237				4	5					
26	March 3,	266	238				4	5					0
27	March 3,	268	242				4	5					
28	March 3,	269	243					5					
29	March 5,	270	244					5					
30	March 5,	271	245					5					
31	March 6,	272	245				4	5					
32	March 7,	273	245					5					
33	March 7,	274	247					5					
34	March 8,	275	247				4	5					
35	March 9,	277	248				4	5					0
36	March 11,	278	248				4	5					
37	March 11,	279	248				4	5					
38	March 12,	280	249				4	5					
39	March 13,	307	273					5					
40	March 13,	281	249				4	5					
41	March 15,	282	251				4	5					
42	March 16,	283	251				4	5					
43	March 17,	284	252				4	5					0
44	March 17,	285	254				4	5					

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45	March 17,	286	255				4	5					
46	March 17,	287	255				4	5					0
47	March 17,	288	256					5					0
48	March 17,	289	256				4	5					
49	March 17,	290	257				4	5					
50	March 19,	291	258				4	5					0
51	March 22,	292	258				4	5					0
52	March 23,	293	259				4	5					
53	March 23,	294	260				4	5					0
54	March 24,	295	261				4	5					
55	March 26,	296	262				4	5					
56	March 26,	297	262				4	5					
57	March 26,	298	263				4	5					
58	March 27,	299	263				4	5					
59	April 1,	302	265	1			4	5				9	0
60	April 1,	303	267		2		4	5	6				0
61	April 1,	304	268				4	5	6				0
62	April 2,	560	492					5				9	0
63	April 4,	300	264				4	5					
64	April 6,	301	264		2		4	5					0
65	April 8,	305	270	1	2		4	5					
66	April 15,	306	271				4	5	6				0
67	April 16,	308	273					5					
68	April 18,	309	274					5					
69	April 18,	310	274					5					
70	April 27,	311	275					5					
71	May 4,	312	275					5					
72	May 12,	313	276					5					
73	May 22,	53	49		2		4						
74	May 25,	314	276					5					
75	May 28,	561	493		2		4						0
76	June 3,	54	50		2		4						
77	June 5,	55	51		2		4						
78	June 7,	56	53		2		4						
79	June 8,	315	276					5					
80	June 22,	171	146			3	4	5					
81	June 25,	562	494										0
82	June 30,	57	53		2		4						0
83	July 2,	563	495		2			5	6			9	0
84	July 2,	58	54		2		4						
85	July 3,	59	55		2		4						
86	July 13,	60	56		2		4						
87	July 13,	61	57		2		4						
88	July 14,	62	57		2								
89	July 20,	63	58		2		4						
90	August 16,	64	59				4		6				
91	August 16,	316	277					5					

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92	October 12,	2	8								8		
93	October 15,	1	8								8		
94	October 18,	3	9								8		
95	October 27,	172	148			3	4						
96	October 27,	173	148			3	4	5					0
97	October 29,	174	149			3	4						0
98	October 30,	175	150			3	4	5					0
99	November 3,	317	278			3	4	5					
100	November 4,	178	150			3	4	5	6				0
101	November 4,	179	152			3	4	5	6				
102	November 6,	180	154			3	4	5	6				
103	November 7,	181	155	1		3	4						0
104	November 10,	564	497				4						0
105	November 12,	176	150			3	4	5					0
106	November 12,	565	498										0
107	November 12,	566	499				4						
108	November 14,	177	150			3	4	5					
109	November 15,	318	279			3	4	5					
110	November 18,	568	501				4			7			
111	November 19,	569	502				4			7			
112	November 22,	319	279					5					
113	November 23,	570	503							7			
114	November 24,	571	504				4			7			
115	November 26,	573	506				4			7			
116	November 27,	572	505				4			7			
117	November 27,	574	509				4			7			
118	December 1,	575	509				4			7			
119	December 8,	576	510		2		4			7			
120	December 9,	577	512				4			7			
121	December 15,	4	9								8		
122	December 19,	579	513				4			7			
123	December 20,	5	10								8		
124	December 21,	580	514				4			7			
125	December 22,	578	513				4			7			
126	December 24,	581	514				4			7			
127	December 24,	582	515				4			7			0
128	December 24,	6	10								8		
129	December 28,	7	10								8		
	1910												
130	January 13,	8	11								8		
131	January 13,	9	12				4				8		
132	January 13,	10	12								8		
133	January 13,	11	13				4				8		
134	January 20,	583	516				4			7			
135	January 21,	65	61		2		4						
136	January 26,	66	62		2		4						
137	January 27,	321	282					5					

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138	January 31,	67	64		2		4						
139	January 31,	68	64		2		4						
140	February 2,	584	516				4			7			
141	February 2,	69	65		2		4						
142	February 2,	324	285					5					
143	February 3,	322	282			3		5	6				0
144	February 4,	325	285					5					
145	February 4,	326	285			3		5	6				
146	February 5,	323	283					5	6				
147	February 6,	327	286					5	6				
148	February 9,	328	286			3	4	5	6				
149	February 12,	332	289			3	4	5					
150	February 12,	333	289			3	4	5	6				
151	February 17,	334	289			3	4	5					
152	February 24,	329	287				4	5					
153	February 26,	330	288				4	5					
154	February 26,	335	291			3	4	5					
155	February 26,	336	291				4	5					
156	February 27,	331	288				4	5					
157	February 27,	337	291				4	5					
158	March 1,	338	291				4	5					
159	March 1,	339	292				4	5					
160	March 1,	340	293			3	4	5					
161	March 2,	341	294			3	4	5					
162	March 3,	342	294				4	5					
163	March 8,	12	15								8		
164	March 10,	343	295					5	6				
165	March 10,	70	66		2		4				8		
166	March 15,	71	67		2		4			7			
167	March 16,	72	68		2		4						
168	March 16,	73	68		2		4				8		
169	March 16,	74	70		2		4			7			
170	March 16,	75	71		2		4			7			
171	March 16,	76	72		2		4			7			
172	March 18,	77	73		2		4			7		9	
173	March 18,	78	73		2		4			7	8		
174	March 18,	79	74		2		4						
175	March 18,	567	499		2	3	4	5					
176	March 19,	344	295					5					
177	March 20,	345	296				4	5	6				
178	March 20,	80	75		2		4						
179	March 21,	81	75		2		4			7	8		
180	March 21,	82	76		2		4			7	8		
181	March 22,	83	76		2		4			7	8		
182	March 22,	346	296				4	5					
183	March 23,	84	77		2		4						
184	March 23,	88	79		2		4						

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185	March 24,	85	78		2								0
186	March 24,	86	78		2		4						
187	March 26,	87	78		2		4			7	8		
188	April 6,	585	517				4			7			
189	April 8,	586	518				4			7			
190	April 9,	587	518				4			7			
191	April 14,	94	84		2						8		
192	April 16,	89	80		2		4				8		0
193	April 16,	90	80		2					7	8		
194	April 16,	91	81		2		4			7			0
195	April 19,	588	519				4			7			0
196	April 21,	347	297		2			5	6				0
197	April 21,	589	519				4			7			
198	April 22,	590	520							7			
199	April 23,	591	520				4			7			
200	April 23,	92	82		2								0
201	April 25,	96	85				4				8		
202	April 25,	592	521							7			
203	April 26,	593	521							7			
204	April 26,	93	83		2		4				8		0
205	April 26,	182	156		2	3	4						
206	April 27,	348	297					5	6				0
207	April 28,	97	86		2		4						
208	May 4,	594	521		2					7			
209	May 7,	13	15								8		
210	May 10,	598	524				4						
211	May 11,	595	522							7			
212	May 12,	14	16								8		
213	May 12,	95	85		2						8		0
214	May 13,	98	86		2		4						
215	May 18,	99	87		2		4			7			0
216	May 18,	596	523							7			
217	May 21,	100	87		2		4			7			
218	May 22,	101	88		2		4						
219	May 24,	102	89		2		4			7		9	
220	May 26,	103	89		2		4						
221	May 31,	104	90		2		4				8	9	0
222	June 7,	597	523							7			
223	June 11,	599	525				4						
224	June 15,	600	525				4						
225	June 24,	15	16		2		4				8		
226	June 24,	16	17				4				8		
227	June 24,	17	17				4				8		
228	June 25,	18	18				4				8		
229	June 28,	19	18				4				8		
230	June 28,	20	19				4				8		
231	June 28,	349	298				4		6	7			0

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232	June 29,	21	20				4				8		
233	June 30,	350	299				4		6	7			0
234	July 7,	351	300				4		6				
235	July 8,	601	525				4						
236	July 14,	22	19								8		0
237	August 3,	352	300				4	5	6				0
238	August 5,	602	526					5					
239	August 17,	106	92		2	3	4				8		0
240	August 18,	107	95		2								
241	September 6,	108	95		2		4						
242	September 7,	183	156				4	5					
243	September 8,	109	95		2		4						
244	September 10,	110	96		2								0
245	September 26,	112	97		2		4						
246	September 26,	354	302				4		6				
247	September 28,	356	304				4	5	6				0
248	September 28,	113	97		2		4						0
249	September 29,	114	98		2		4						
250	October 1,	115	98		2		4						
251	October 3,	111	96		2		4						
252	October 8,	116	98		2		4				8		0
253	October 23,	355	302				4		6	7			
254	October 24,	353	301				4		6	7			0
255	October 26,	117	102		2		4						
256	November 8,	357	304					5					0
257	November 11,	603	526										0
258	November 19,	23	21								8		
259	November 23,	24	22				4				8		
260	November 26,	320	280				4	5					
261	December 2,	26	24								8		0
262	December 10,	25	23				4				8		
263	December 10,	27	27								8		0
264	December 15,	604	527		2		4			7			0
265	December 17,	28	28				4				8		0
266	December 20,	605	528				4			7			
267	December 21,	606	529				4			7			
268	December 23,	29	29								8		0
269	December 24,	30	29								8		
	1911												
270	January 3,	608	531	1	2		4						
271	January 5,	607	529										0
272	January 7,	610	532		2					7			
273	January 9,	609	532				4						0
274	January 10,	611	532				4						
275	January 11,	612	533				4						
276	January 15,	358	305					5					
277	January 15,	613	533				4						

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278	January 15,	614	534		2		4			7			0
279	January 17,	615	536		2		4			7			0
280	January 21,	616	539		2		4						
281	January 27,	617	539		2		4						
282	January 27,	618	539		2		4			7			0
283	January 28,	118	104		2		4						
284	February 1,	119	104		2								
285	February 2,	620	545				4						0
286	February 4,	621	547				4			7			
287	February 4,	622	547				4			7			
288	February 4,	623	548				4			7			
289	February 6,	31	29								8		0
290	February 6,	624	548				4			7			
291	February 6,	625	549		2		4			7			
292	February 7,	626	549				4						0
293	February 7,	627	549		2		4			7			
294	February 9,	628	550		2		4	5		7			0
295	February 10,	629	551				4			7			
296	February 11,	630	551				4			7			
297	February 11,	631	552				4			7			
298	February 12,	632	552							7			
299	February 13,	633	553				4			7			
300	February 14,	619	542		2		4	5	6	7	8	9	0
301	February 15,	359	306				4	5	6				0
302	February 15,	634	553							7			
303	February 17,	635	553		2		4			7			
304	February 17,	636	554				4			7			
305	February 17,	637	555				4			7			
306	February 18,	638	555				4			7			
307	February 18,	639	555							7			
308	February 20,	32	30				4				8		
309	February 21,	33	30								8		0
310	February 23,	640	556							7			
311	February 26,	641	556		2		4			7	8		
312	February 28,	360	307		2		4	5	6	7			
313	March 3,	643	558				4						0
314	March 3,	645	560				4						0
315	March 11,	362	309					5					
316	March 14,	642	557				4			7			
317	March 14,	644	559				4						0
318	March 14,	650	563		2		4			7		9	0
319	March 16,	646	560				4			7			
320	March 16,	653	566		2		4			7			
321	March 21,	654	567				4			7			
322	March 22,	647	561				4			7			
323	March 23,	648	562				4			7			
324	March 24,	655	567		2					7			

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325	March 26,	649	562				4			7			
326	March 27,	656	567		2					7			
327	March 28,	651	564		2		4		6	7	8		0
328	March 28,	669	577				4				8	9	
329	March 31,	652	566				4						0
330	April 1,	34	30				4				8		0
331	April 1,	365	314					5	6				
332	April 1,	657	568		2					7			
333	April 2,	366	314					5					
334	April 3,	658	568		2					7			
335	April 8,	367	314					5					
336	April 13,	670	578				4					9	0
337	April 15,	361	308						6				0
338	April 25,	363	310				4	5		7	8		0
339	April 26,	659	568		2		4			7			
340	April 28,	671	579				4				8	9	
341	April 29,	35	31								8		0
342	May 5,	675	585				4					9	
343	May 9,	660	569							7			
344	May 9,	672	581				4					9	0
345	May 11,	661	569				4			7			
346	May 11,	673	581	1	2	3	4					9	0
347	May 11,	676	585				4					9	
348	May 15,	662	570							7			
349	May 17,	663	570				4			7			
350	May 17,	664	570				4			7			
351	May 20,	677	585				4					9	
352	May 22,	678	586									9	
353	May 23,	674	582				4			7	8	9	0
354	May 24,	679	587				4					9	
355	May 24,	665	571		2		4			7			0
356	May 27,	368	315					5					
357	June 21,	666	574		2		4			7	8		
358	July 2,	680	588				4					9	
359	July 3,	681	589				4					9	
360	July 3,	682	589									9	
361	July 3,	683	590									9	
362	July 3,	684	590				4					9	
363	July 5,	685	590				4					9	0
364	July 5,	686	591									9	
365	July 6,	687	592									9	
366	July 8,	369	315					5					0
367	July 11,	120	105		2								
368	July 17,	121	105		2								
369	July 17,	122	105		2								
370	July 17,	123	106		2								
371	July 17,	36	32		2		4						0

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372	July 19,	688	592				4			7		9	0
373	July 22,	184	157			3	4	5					
374	July 26,	124	106		2								
375	August 1,	667	575				4			7			
376	August 1,	689	594				4					9	0
377	August 16,	690	597				4					9	
378	August 16,	691	598		2		4	5				9	0
379	August 17,	125	106		2								
380	August 18,	692	599									9	0
381	August 19,	126	107		2								
382	August 22,	127	107		2								
383	August 23,	128	109		2								
384	August 26,	186	158	1		3	4	5	6				0
385	August 29,	693	599				4					9	0
386	September 6,	694	602				4					9	
387	September 7,	668	576				4			7			
388	September 7,	695	602				4					9	
389	September 7,	696	602				4					9	0
390	September 7,	699	604									9	
391	September 8,	697	603				4					9	0
392	September 8,	698	604				4					9	0
393	September 9,	700	605				4					9	
394	September 12,	187	159			3	4	5					
395	September 13,	188	159			3							
396	September 14,	701	605				4				8	9	
397	September 17,	702	605				4					9	0
398	September 19,	704	606				4				8	9	
399	September 20,	703	606				4					9	
400	September 26,	189	159			3		5	6				
401	September 27,	190	161	1		3	4		6			9	
402	September 30,	192	162			3	4						
403	October 1,	191	162				4		6				
404	October 8,	193	162				4		6				
405	October 8,	371	316	1			4	5	6				
406	October 13,	706	609									9	0
407	October 14,	373	317						6				
408	October 15,	374	318					5	6				
409	October 20,	129	109		2							9	0
410	October 22,	194	163				4	5	6				
411	October 23,	376	319				4	5	6				
412	October 23,	377	320		2		4	5	6				0
413	October 24,	130	112		2								0
414	October 24,	131	113		2					7			0
415	October 24,	378	323				4		6				0
416	October 24,	705	607	1		3	4					9	0
417	October 25,	707	609									9	
418	October 25,	379	324				4		6				

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419	October 25,	380	324			3	4	5	6	7			
420	October 26,	381	325				4		6				
421	November 1,	196	165	1			4		6				
422	November 2,	382	325				4		6				
423	November 3,	375	318				4		6	7			
424	November 4,	197	165	1		3	4		6				0
425	November 6,	195	164	1		3	4	5	6			9	0
426	November 7,	185	157			3	4	5	6				
427	November 8,	132	114		2								
428	November 8,	133	114		2								0
429	November 8,	383	325			3	4		6				
430	November 8,	384	328		2		4	5	6	7	8		0
431	November 11,	134	115		2		4						
432	November 11,	136	117		2								0
433	November 16,	135	116		2								0
434	November 18,	137	120		2		4						
435	November 19,	138	121		2								
436	November 20,	139	121		2					7			
437	November 21,	140	122		2		4						
438	November 21,	141	123	1	2	3	4					9	
439	November 21,	708	609		2		4					9	0
440	November 22,	711	613		2		4						0
441	November 23,	142	124		2		4						0
442	November 23,	143	124		2		4						0
443	November 23,	144	125		2		4						
444	November 24,	145	125		2		4						
445	November 24,	146	126		2		4						
446	November 24,	385	330						6				
447	November 26,	147	126		2		4						
448	November 26,	148	127		2								0
449	November 29,	149	128		2								
450	November 30,	155	133		2								
451	November 30,	709	610		2		4						0
452	December 1,	150	128		2		4						
453	December 1,	156	134		2								0
454	December 2,	151	128	1	2	3	4						
455	December 2,	152	129		2		4						0
456	December 3,	157	134		2								0
457	December 4,	153	131		2		4						0
458	December 4,	158	134		2		4						0
459	December 5,	154	133		2								
460	December 8,	159	135		2								
461	December 10,	160	135		2								
462	December 12,	372	316				4	5					0
463	December 20,	710	611				4	5				9	0
464	December 22,	161	135		2								0
465	December 23,	162	136		2								0

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466	December 24,	163	137		2								0
467	December 24,	164	137		2								0
468	December 27,	39	36				4				8		
469	December 29,	744	656				4			7			
	1912												
470	January 1,	165	137		2								
471	January 3,	166	138		2								
472	January 5,	167	138		2								
473	January 6,	168	139		2								
474	January 15,	386	330		2			5	6		8		0
475	January 18,	169	139		2								
476	January 23,	38	33				4				8		0
477	January 25,	37	33				4				8		
478	January 28,	170	139	1	2	3	4						0
479	February 8,	712	614		2		4	5	6	7	8	9	0
480	February 8,	713	622				4					9	0
481	February 9,	714	623				4					9	0
482	February 9,	387	332				4		6				
483	February 10,	715	624		2		4			7		9	0
484	February 12,	745	657							7			
485	February 13,	388	333				4		6	7			
486	February 13,	716	627				4						0
487	February 13,	717	628				4			7			0
488	February 13,	718	629				4						0
489	February 16,	389	334						6	7			
490	February 17,	719	629		2		4						0
491	February 18,	720	630		2		4			7			0
492	February 19,	390	334				4		6	7			
493	February 20,	391	335		2				6	7	8		
494	February 21,	392	335				4		6	7			
495	February 29,	721	633				4			7			0
496	March 5,	394	336				4		6	7	8		
497	March 15,	722	634				4						0
498	March 15,	723	635				4						0
499	March 18,	40	37				4				8		0
500	March 22,	41	37				4				8		0
501	March 23,	393	336				4		6	7			
502	March 25,	198	166	1		3	4	5					0
503	March 25,	239	192	1	2	3	4	5			8		0
504	March 29,	724	635						6				0
505	March 30,	396	339				4	5					0
506	April 1,	397	339				4	5					
507	April 4,	398	340				4	5					
508	April 16,	399	340				4	5					
509	April 20,	42	38				4				8		
510	April 23,	746	657							7			
511	April 30,	199	167				4		6				

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512	April 30,	200	168				4		6				0
513	April 30,	395	337						6	7	8		
514	May 1,	201	169			3	4		6				
515	May 2,	202	169				4		6				
516	May 2,	203	169				4		6				
517	May 8,	725	636				4						
518	May 9,	204	170				4		6				0
519	May 11,	206	171				4						
520	May 11,	401	341					5	6				
521	May 14,	43	38				4				8		0
522	May 15,	205	171				4		6				
523	May 18,	208	173				4		6				
524	May 18,	726	637				4						
525	May 21,	207	172	1		3	4		6	7			0
526	May 23,	209	174	1			4	5	6				
527	May 24,	727	638										0
528	May 28,	210	175			3	4		6				
529	May 28,	211	175				4						
530	May 29,	212	175				4						
531	May 30,	213	176				4						
532	May 30,	214	176				4		6				
533	May 30,	215	178	1		3	4		6				0
534	May 30,	405	343				4	5	6				
535	May 31,	728	640				4		6				0
536	May 31,	219	183				4						
537	May 31,	220	183	1		3	4		6		9		
538	June 1,	747	657				4			7			
539	June 2,	729	642				4						0
540	June 4,	732	645		2	4							
541	June 4,	733	645				4						
542	June 4,	216	179	1			4						0
543	June 4,	248	200			3	4	5	6				
544	June 6,	217	180	1			4						0
545	June 6,	221	183				4	5	6				
546	June 6,	730	643				4						0
547	June 6,	406	346			3	4	5	6				
548	June 7,	731	644				4						0
549	June 9,	222	184				4		6			9	0
550	June 9,	223	184				4		6				
551	June 10,	224	185				4		6				0
552	June 11,	225	185	1		3	4		6				
553	June 13,	226	186				4						
554	June 14,	227	187				4						
555	June 14,	748	657				4			7			
556	June 17,	749	658				4			7			
557	June 17,	228	187				4						
558	June 17,	229	188				4						

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559	June 18,	230	188				4	5					
560	June 18,	241	193	1		3	4	5					0
561	June 20,	240	193	1		3	4						
562	June 20,	400	340					5					
563	June 20,	407	347				4	5					0
564	June 20,	750	658				4			7			
565	June 23,	231	189				4	5					
566	June 24,	232	189				4						
567	June 24,	233	189				4		6				
568	June 26,	751	659				4			7			
569	July 2,	44	39				4				8		
570	July 2,	45	39				4				8		
571	July 2,	242	194	1		3	4	5					
572	July 7,	734	646				4						
573	July 8,	408	348				4	5					
574	July 8,	409	348					5	6				
575	July 8,	735	646		2		4	5	6	7	8		0
576	July 11,	243	195			3			6				
577	July 11,	736	648		2		4						0
578	July 13,	234	190				4						
579	July 16,	737	649		2		4						0
580	July 17,	738	650				4						0
581	July 17,	419	352					5	6				
582	July 18,	218	182	1			4		6			9	0
583	July 18,	739	650				4						
584	July 20,	411	349				4	5	6				
585	July 21,	412	349				4	5	6				
586	July 23,	413	350					5					
587	July 29,	414	350					5					
588	July 30,	244	196			3		5					
589	August 2,	740	651										0
590	August 6,	741	652				4						0
591	August 6,	402	341					5	6				
592	August 10,	742	652				4						0
593	August	743	652	1			4	5	6			9	0
594	August 13,	245	197	1		3							0
595	August 13,	246	197	1		3	4	5	6				0
596	August 14,	752	659							7			
597	August 15,	423	355					5	6				
598	August 18,	235	191				4		6				
599	August 18,	420	353				4	5	6				
600	August 18,	421	354				4	5	6				
601	August 19,	403	342					5	6				
602	August 20,	415	350					5					
603	August 21,	425	356				4	5	6				
604	August 21,	753	659				4			7			
605	August 23,	754	660				4			7			

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606	August 23,	422	355				4	5	6				
607	August 29,	424	356				4	5	6				
608	August 29,	427	357					5	6				
609	August 31,	46	40								8		0
610	September 1,	426	357				4	5					
611	September 2,	236	191				4	5	6				
612	September 7,	755	660				4			7			
613	September 11,	756	661							7			
614	September 13,	757	661				4			7			
615	September 20,	237	191				4						
616	September 20,	410	348					5					
617	September 20,	428	358					5	6				
618	September 27,	416	351					5	6				
619	September 30,	417	351				4	5	6				
620	September 30,	418	352				4	5	6				
621	October	105	91		2					7	8		
622	October	431	366		2		4	5	6		8		0
623	October 8,	404	343					5	6				
624	October 14,	238	192				4		6			9	
625	October 21,	432	370				4	5	6				0
626	October 21,	433	371				4	5	6				
627	October 21,	434	371				4	5	6				
628	October 21,	435	372		2		4	5	6				0
629	October 22,	436	373		2		4	5	6				0
630	October 23,	429	360			3	4	5	6				0
631	October 23,	430	362				4	5	6				0
632	October 24,	437	375				4	5	6				
633	October 24,	438	375			3	4	5	6				
634	October 28,	439	376				4	5	6				
635	October 29,	440	376				4	5	6				
636	October 30,	441	378				4	5	6				0
637	October 31,	249	200	1		3	4	5					
638	October 31,	442	379				4	5	6				
639	October 31,	443	381				4	5	6				
640	October 31,	444	382				4	5	6				
641	November 1,	445	382				4	5	6				
642	November 2,	446	382				4	5	6				
643	November 2,	447	383				4	5	6				0
644	November 2,	448	384				4	5	6				
645	November 4,	449	385				4	5	6				0
646	November 4,	450	386				4	5	6				
647	November 4,	451	387				4	5	6				
648	November 4,	461	394			3	4	5	6				0
649	November 5,	456	390				4	5	6				
650	November 6,	452	387				4	5	6				0
651	November 6,	457	391			3	4	5	6				0
652	November 7,	453	388				4	5	6				0

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653	November 7,	454	388				4	5	6				
654	November 7,	458	391				4	5					0
655	November 7,	460	393				4	5					0
656	November 8,	459	392			3	4	5					
657	November 9,	455	389					5	6				
658	November 9,	247	199	1		3	4	5					0
659	November 9,	462	395					5					0
660	November 11,	463	396				4	5					0
661	November 11,	464	397				4	5					0
662	November 11,	465	397				4	5					
663	November 12,	466	398				4	5					0
664	November 14,	467	398				4	5					0
665	November 14,	468	399				4	5					0
666	November 14,	469	399				4	5					0
667	November 14,	470	400				4	5					0
668	November 14,	471	401				4	5					0
669	November 16,	472	401				4	5					
670	November 17,	474	403				4	5					0
671	November 18,	473	402				4	5					0
672	November 18,	475	404				4	5					0
673	November 20,	476	404				4	5	6	7			0
674	November 20,	477	406	1		3	4	5					0
675	November 22,	848	723				4						0
676	November 23,	849	724				4						0
677	November 23,	478	407				4	5					0
678	November 23,	479	408				4	5					
679	November 23,	480	409				4	5					0
680	November 24,	481	409			3	4	5					0
681	November 25,	482	411				4	5					
682	November 25,	483	411			3	4	5					0
683	November 25,	484	412				4	5					
684	November 26,	485	412				4	5					
685	November 26,	486	413				4	5					
686	November 26,	487	413				4	5					
687	November 26,	489	414				4		6				0
688	November 26,	495	422				4	5					
689	November 26,	496	422				4	5					
690	November 27,	488	413					5					
691	November 28,	491	415				4	5	6				0
692	November 28,	497	423				4	5					0
693	November 28,	498	423				4	5					
694	November 28,	499	424				4	5					
695	November 29,	500	425				4	5					0
696	November 30,	490	414				4		6				
697	November 30,	501	425				4	5					
698	December 1,	502	426				4	5					0
699	December 2,	492	417				4	5	6				

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700	December 4,	503	427				4	5					
701	December 4,	504	428				4	5					
702	December 4,	505	428				4	5					
703	December 4,	507	429				4	5					
704	December 5,	506	428				4	5					
705	December 6,	508	429				4	5					
706	December 6,	509	430				4	5					
707	December 6,	765	666				4	5					0
708	December 6,	766	666				4	5					0
709	December 8,	510	430				4	5					
710	December 9,	511	430				4	5					0
711	December 9,	512	431				4	5					
712	December 9,	513	431				4	5					
713	December 10,	514	432				4	5					0
714	December 10,	515	433				4	5					
715	December 10,	516	434				4	5					
716	December 11,	767	667				4	5					0
717	December 11,	517	434				4	5					
718	December 12,	518	435				4	5					
719	December 14,	519	435				4	5					
	1913												
720	January 3,	768	668				4	5					0
721	January 29,	370	315				4	5					0
722	February 9,	769	668					5					0
723	February 12,	770	668					5					0
724	February 13,	771	669				4	5					0
725	February 28,	772	669				4	5					0
726	March 14,	773	670					5					0
727	March 16,	759	661							7			
728	April 10,	774	672										0
729	April 11,	775	673				4						0
730	April 14,	776	673				4						0
731	April 19,	777	673										0
732	May 1,	493	418	1	2	3	4	5	6				
733	May 9,	758	661							7			
734	May 10,	494	421				4		6	7			
735	May 16,	778	673										0
736	May 18,	760	662							7			
737	May 19,	761	662							7			
738	May 19,	779	674										0
739	May 21,	762	663				4			7			
740	May 26,	763	664				4			7			
741	May 30,	764	665				4			7			
742	June 27,	780	674				4	5	6			9	0
743	November 20,	250	201	1			4	5					0
744	November 21,	47	40								8		
745	November 21,	781	676					5	6				

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746	November 25,	782	678				4		6				
747	November 26,	783	678				4		6				
748	November 26,	784	678				4		6				
749	November 28,	785	679				4		6				
750	December 2,	786	680				4		6				
751	December 2,	787	680				4		6				
752	December 4,	251	203	1		3	4						0
753	December 7,	788	681				4		6				
754	December 9,	48	40				4				8		0
755	December 9,	789	682				4		6				
756	December 9,	790	682						6				
757	December 9,	791	683				4		6				
758	December 9,	792	683				4		6				
759	December 10,	793	684				4		6				
760	December 10,	794	685				4		6				
761	December 10,	796	686						6				
762	December 11,	795	685				4		6				0
763	December 11,	797	687						6				
764	December 12,	798	687				4		6				
765	December 12,	799	688				4		6				
766	December 12,	800	688				4		6				
767	December 13,	801	688				4		6				
768	December 14,	802	688				4		6				
769	December 14,	803	689						6				
770	December 14,	804	689						6				0
771	December 15,	805	690						6				
772	December 16,	806	690						6				
773	December 16,	807	691						6				
774	December 17,	808	691						6				
775	December 17,	809	692						6				
776	December 17,	810	692						6				
777	December 18,	811	692				4		6				
778	December 18,	812	693				4		6				
779	December 20,	813	693				4		6				
780	December 20,	814	694						6				
781	December 20,	815	695						6				
782	December 20,	816	695						6				
783	December 21,	817	696						6				
784	December 29,	818	696						6				
785	December 30,	819	697				4		6				0
786	December 30,	820	698				4		6				0
787	December 30,	821	698						6				
788	December 31,	822	699				4		6				
789	December 31,	823	699				4		6				
	1914												
790	January 1,	824	699				4		6	7			0
791	January 1,	825	701						6				

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792	January 2,	826	702				4		6				0
793	January 4,	827	702				4		6				
794	January 5,	828	702						6				0
795	January 5,	829	703				4		6				
796	January 5,	830	703						6				
797	January 5,	831	704				4		6				0
798	January 7,	832	705				4		6				0
799	January 8,	833	705				4		6				
800	January 12,	834	706						6				
801	January 13,	835	706						6				
802	January 16,	836	706						6				0
803	January 24,	520	436				4	5					
804	February 12,	840	712				4						0
805	February 13,	837	709				4						0
806	February 17,	521	439					5	6				
807	February 18,	841	713				4	5					0
808	February 24,	253	206			3	4	5	6				0
809	February 24,	522	440					5	6				
810	March 2,	523	441				4	5					
811	March 5,	530	446					5					
812	March 9,	49	41				4				8		
813	March 11,	50	42				4				8		
814	March 12,	838	711				4						0
815	March 14,	51	42								8		
816	March 16,	52	43								8		
817	March 26,	525	444					5					
818	March 26,	526	444					5					
819	March 29,	527	445					5					
820	March 30,	528	445					5					
821	March 30,	529	445					5					
822	April 2,	842	713		2		4	5	6		8		0
823	April 3,	524	442				4	5	6				0
824	April 7,	531	448					5					
825	April 9,	839	711										0
826	April 9,	843	715				4						0
827	April 21,	252	204	1		3	4					9	0
828	April 22,	534	450					5					
829	April 26,	535	450				4	5					
830	April 28,	536	451				4	5					
831	May 7,	537	451				4	5					
832	May 12,	844	716				4						0
833	May 13,	538	451				4	5					0
834	May 14,	364	312				4	5			8		0
835	May 16,	845	718				4						0
836	May 18,	846	719		2		4		6				0
837	May 18,	850	724				4		6				0
838	May 18,	539	453				4	5					

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839	May 19,	532	448					5					
840	May 23,	847	721				4						0
841	May 23,	540	453				4	5					
842	May 25,	541	453				4	5					
843	May 30,	542	454				4	5					
844	May 30,	543	455				4	5					
845	June 6,	544	455				4	5					
846	June 6,	851	727				4						0
847	June 11,	852	728				4						0
848	June 12,	853	729				4						0
849	June 13,	854	730				4						0
850	June 19,	545	455				4	5					
851	June 25,	855	730				4						0
852	June 25,	856	731		2		4				8		0
853	June 29,	546	456					5					
854	June 30,	547	456					5					
855	July 2,	254	208			3	4	5					
856	July 2,	857	732		2		4						0
857	July 7,	533	450					5					
858	July 16,	858	734				4	5					0

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